

THE
HISTORY
OF
BRITISH INDIA
BY JAMES MILL, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E.

IN the course of reading and investigation, necessary for acquiring that measure of knowledge which I was anxious to possess, respecting my country, its people, its government, its interests, its policy, and its laws, I was met, and in some degree surprised, by extraordinary difficulties, when I arrived at that part of my inquiries which related to India. On other subjects, of any magnitude and importance, I generally found, that there was some one book, or small number of books, containing the material part of the requisite information; and in which direction was obtained, by reference, to other books, if, in any part, the reader found it necessary to extend his researches. In regard to India, the case was exceedingly different. The knowledge requisite for attaining an adequate conception of that great scene of British action, was collected no where. It was scattered in a great variety of repositories, sometimes in considerable portions, often in very minute ones; sometimes by itself, often mixed up with subjects of a very different nature: but even where information relating to India stood disjoined from other subjects, a small portion of what was useful lay commonly imbedded in a large mass of what was trifling and insignificant; and of a body of statements, given indiscriminately as matters of fact, ascertained by the senses, the far greater part was in general only matter of opinion, borrowed, in succession, by one set of Indian gentlemen from another.*

* The difficulty arising from this source of false information was felt by the very first accurate historian.

Οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι τὰς ἀκοὰς τῶν προγεννημένων, καὶ ἡ ἐπιχώρια σφισιν ἢ, ὁμοίως ἀβασανισμός παρ' ἀλλήλων διχῶνται. Thucyd. lib. i. c. κ'. Other excellent observations to the same purpose are found in the two following chapters.

In bestowing the time, labour, and thought, necessary to explore this assemblage of heterogeneous things, and to separate, for my own use, what was true and what was useful, from what was insignificant and what was false, I was led to grieve, that none of those who had preceded me, in collecting for themselves a knowledge of Indian affairs, had been induced to leave their collection for the benefit of others; and perform the labour of extracting and ordering the dispersed and confused materials of a knowledge of India, once for all. The second reflection was, that, if those who preceded me had neglected this important service, and in so doing were not altogether free from blame, neither should I be exempt from the same condemnation, if I omitted what depended upon me, to facilitate and abridge to others the labour of acquiring a knowledge of India; an advantage I should have valued so highly, had it been bestowed upon me by any former inquirer.

In this manner, the idea of writing a History of India was first engendered in my mind. I should have shrunk from the task, had I foreseen the labour in which it has involved me.

The books, in which more or less of information respecting India might be expected to be found, were sufficiently numerous to compose a library. Some were books of Travels. Some were books of History. Some contained philological, some antiquarian researches. A considerable number consisted of translations from the writings of the natives in the native tongues; others were books on the religion of the people of India; books on their laws; books on their sciences, manners, and arts.

The transactions in India were not the only transactions of the British nation, to which the affairs of India had given birth. Those affairs had been the subject of much discussion by the press, and of many legislative, executive, and even judicial proceedings, in England. Those discussions and proceedings would form of course an essential part of the History of British India; and the materials of it remained to be extracted, with much labour, from the voluminous records of British literature, and British legislation.

The British legislature had not satisfied itself with deliberating, and deciding; it had also inquired; and, inquiring, it had called for evidence. This call, by the fortunate publicity of parliamentary proceedings, brought forth the records of the councils in India, and their correspondence, with one another, with their servants, and with the constituted authorities in England: a portion of materials, inestimable in its value; but so appalling by its magnitude, that many years appeared to be inadequate to render the mind familiar with it.

Such is a short and very imperfect description of the state of the materials.* The operations necessary, to draw from them a useful history, formed the second subject of consideration. To omit other particulars, which will easily present themselves, and are common to this with all undertakings of a similar nature, a peculiar demand, it is evident, was presented for the exercise of discrimination, that is, of criticism, in a chaotic mass, of such extent, where things related to the subject were to be separated from things foreign to it; where circumstances of importance were to be separated from circumstances that were insignificant; where real facts, and just inferences, were to be separated from such as were the contrary; and above all things, where facts, really testified by the senses, were to be discriminated from matters, given as testified by the senses, but which, in truth, were nothing but matters of opinion, confounded with matters of fact, and mistaken for them, in the minds of the reporters themselves.†

* Il y avoit plus de choses la dessus qu'on ne le croyoit communement, mais elles estoient noyées dans une foule de recueils immenses, en langues Latine, Espagnole, Angloise, et Hollandoise, ou personne ne s'avisait de les aller chercher; dans une quantité de routiers tres-secs, tres-ennuyeux, relatifs à cent autres objets, et dont il seroit presque impossible de rendre la lecture interessante. Les difficultés ne touchent guère ceux qui ne les essayent pas. Hist. des Navigation aux Terres Australes, par M. le President de Brosse.

† L'on ne sent que trop, says Mr. Gibbon, combien nous sommes portés à mêler nos idées avec celles que nous rapportons. Memoire sur la Monarchie des Medes, Gibbon's Miscel. Works, iii. 61. Ed. 8vo. This infirmity of the human mind, a fact of great importance, both in speculation and in action, the reader, who is not already acquainted with it, will find very

A history of India, therefore, to be good for any thing, must, it was evident, be, what, for want of a better appellation, has been called, "A Critical History."* To criticise means, to judge. A critical history is, then, a *judging* history. But, if a judging-history, what does it judge?

It is evident that there are two, and only two, classes of objects, which constitute the subject of historical judgments. The first is, the matter of statement, the things given by the historian, as things really done, really said, or really thought. The second is, the matter of evidence, the matter by which the reality of the saying, the doing, or thinking, is ascertained.

In regard to evidence, the business of criticism visibly is, to bring to light the value of each article, to discriminate what is true from what is false, to combine partial statements, in order to form a complete account, to compare varying, and balance contradictory statements; in order to form a correct one.

to construction of the second volume of the work of Mr. Dugald Stewart, on the Philosophy of the Human Mind. See p. 385, vol. i. of the present work. Many examples of it will present themselves in the course of this history; for as it is a habit peculiarly congenial to the mental state of the natives, so a combination of circumstances has given it unusual efficacy in the minds of those of our countrymen by whom India has been surveyed.

been the case of critical history is not very old. The first man who seems to have had a distinct conception of it, says "if Je traiterai mon sujet en critique, suivant la regle de St. Paul, *Examinez toutes choses, et ne retenez que ce qui est bon.* L'histoire n'est bien souvent qu'un melange confus de faux et de vrai, entasse par des ecrivains mal instruits, credules, ou passionnez. C'est au lecteur attentif et judicieux d'en faire le discernement, à l'aide d'une critique, qui ne soit ni trop timide, ni temeraire. Sans le secours de cet art, on erre dans l'histoire, comme un pilote sur le mer, lorsqu'il n'a ni boussole, ni carte marine." Beausobre, Hist. de Manichee, Disc. Prelim. p. 7.

The same writer has, also, said, what is not foreign to the present purpose; "Une histoire critique ne pouvant être trop bien justifiée, j'ai eu soin de mettre en original, au bas des pages, les passages qui servent de preuve aux faits que j'avance. C'est un ennuyeux travail, mais je l'ai cru nécessaire. Si l'on trouve les citations trop amples et trop abondantes, c'est un superflu qui n'a coûté qu'un mot, et le lecteur peut bien m'en pardonner la depense." Id. Ibid. Pref. p. 24.

A great historian of our own has said "It is the right, it is the duty of a critical historian to collect, to weigh, to select the opinions of his predecessors; and the more diligence he has exerted in the search, the more rationally he may hope to add some improvement to the stock of knowledge, the use of which has been common to all." Gibbon's Miscel. Works, iv. 589.

In regard to the matter of statement, the business of criticism is, to discriminate between real causes and false causes; real effects and false effects; real tendencies and falsely supposed ones; between good ends and evil ends; means that are conducive, and means not conducive to the ends to which they are applied.

In exhibiting the result of these several judgments, the satisfaction, or the instruction of the reader, is very imperfectly provided for, if the reasons are not adduced. I have no apology, therefore, to make, for those inductions, or those ratiocinations, sometimes of considerable length, which were necessary to exhibit the grounds on which my decisions were founded. Those critical disquisitions may be well, or they may be ill performed; they may lead to correct, or they may lead to erroneous conclusions; but they are, indisputably, in place; and my work, whatever had been its virtues in other respects, would have remained most imperfect without them.*

There will be but one opinion, I suppose, with regard to the importance of the service, which I have aspired to the honour of rendering to my country; for the public are inclined to exaggerate, rather than extenuate, the magnitude of the interests which are involved in the management of their Indian affairs. And it may be affirmed, as a principle, not susceptible of dispute, that good management of any portion of the affairs of any community is almost always

* Even those strictures, which sometimes occur, on institutions purely British, will be all found, I am persuaded, to be not only strictly connected with measures which relate to India, and which have actually grown out of those institutions; but indispensably necessary to convey complete and correct ideas of the Indian policy which the institutions in question contributed mainly to shape. The whole course of our Indian policy having, for example, been directed by the laws of parliamentary influence, how could the one be explained without adducing, as in the last chapter of the second volume, and in some other places, the leading principles of the other? The result of all the judicial inquiries, which have been attempted in England, on Indian affairs, depending in a great degree on the state of the law in England, how could those events be sufficiently explained, without adducing, as in the chapter on the trial of Mr. Hastings, those particulars in the state of the law of England, on which the results in question appeared more remarkably to depend? The importance of this remark will be felt, and, I hope, remembered when the time for judging of the use and pertinence of those elucidations, arrives.

proportional to the degree of knowledge respecting it diffused in that community. Hitherto the knowledge of India, enjoyed by the British community, has been singularly defective. Not only among the uneducated, and those who are regardless of knowledge, but among those who are solicitous to obtain a competent share of information with respect to every other great branch of the national interests, nothing is so rare as to meet with a man who can with propriety be said to know any thing of India, and its affairs. A man who has any considerable acquaintance with them, without having been forced to acquire it by the offices he has filled, is scarcely perhaps to be found.

The same must continue to be the case, till the knowledge of India is rendered more accessible. Few men can afford the time sufficient for perusing even a moderate portion of the documents from which a knowledge of India, approaching to completeness, must have hitherto been derived. Of those, whose time is not wholly engrossed, either by business or by pleasure, the proportion is very moderate whom the prospect of a task so heavy, and so tedious, as that of exploring the numerous repositories of Indian knowledge, would not deter. And, with respect to the most important of all the sources of information, the parliamentary documents, they were not before the public, and by the very nature of the case within the reach of a number comparatively small.

But though no dispute will arise about the importance of the work, I have no reason to expect the same unanimity about the fitness of the workman.

One objection will doubtless be taken, on which I think it necessary to offer some observations, notwithstanding the unfavourable sentiments which are commonly excited by almost any language in which a man can urge pretensions which he may be suspected of urging as his own; pretensions which, though they must exist, in some degree, in the case of every man who writes a book, and ought to be encouraged, therefore, rather than extinguished, had better, in general, be understood, than expressed.

This writer, it will be said, has never been in India; and, if he has any, has a very slight, and elementary acquaintance, with any of the languages of the East.

I confess the facts; and will now proceed to mention the considerations, which led me, notwithstanding, to conclude, that I might still produce a work, of considerable utility, on the subject of India.

In the first place, it appeared to me, that a sufficient stock of information was now collected in the languages of Europe, to enable the inquirer to ascertain every important point, in the history of India. If I was right in that opinion, it is evident, that a residence in India, or a knowledge of the languages of India, was, to express myself moderately, not indispensable.

In the next place, I observed, that no exceptions were taken to a President of the Board of Control, or to a Governor-General, the men entrusted with all the powers of government, because they had never been in India, and knew none of its languages.

Again, I certainly knew, that some of the most successful attempts in history had been made, without ocular knowledge of the country, or acquaintance with its language. Robertson, for example, never beheld America, though he composed its history. He never was either in Germany or Spain, yet he wrote the history of Charles the Fifth. Of Germany he knew not so much as the language; and it was necessary for him to learn that of Spain, only because the documents which it yielded were not translated into any of the languages with which he was acquainted. Tacitus, though he never was in Germany, and was certainly not acquainted with the language of our uncultivated ancestors, wrote the exquisite account of the manners of the Germans.

But, as some knowledge may be acquired by seeing India, which cannot be acquired without it; and as it can be pronounced of hardly any portion of knowledge that it is altogether useless, I will not go so far as to deny, that a man would possess advantages, who, to all the qualifications for writing a history of India which it is possible to acquire in Europe, should add those qualifications which can be acquired only by seeing the country and conversing with its people. Yet I have no doubt of being able to make out, to the satisfaction of all reflecting minds, that the man who should bring to the com-

position of a history of India the qualifications alone which can be acquired in Europe, would come, in an almost infinite degree, better fitted for the task, than the man who should bring to it the qualifications alone which can be acquired in India; and that the business of acquiring the one set of qualifications is almost wholly incompatible with that of acquiring the other.

For, let us inquire what it is that a man can learn, by going to India, and understanding its languages. He can treasure up the facts, which are presented to his senses; he can learn the facts which are recorded in such native books, as have not been translated; and he can ascertain facts by conversation with the natives, which have never yet been committed to writing. This he can do; and I am not aware that he can do any thing further.

But, as no fact is more certain, so none is of more importance, in the science of human nature, than this; that the powers of observation, in every individual, are exceedingly limited; and that it is only by combining the observations of a number of individuals, that a competent knowledge of any extensive subject can ever be acquired. Of so extensive and complicated a scene as India, how small a portion would the whole period of his life enable any man to observe!

If, then, we may assume it as an acknowledged fact, that an account of India complete in all its parts, at any one moment, still more through a series of ages, could never be derived from the personal observation of any one individual, but must be collected from the testimony of a great number of individuals, of any one of whom the powers of perception could extend but a little way, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that the man best qualified for dealing with evidence, is the man best qualified for writing the history of India. It will not, I presume, admit of much dispute, that the habits which are subservient to the successful exploration of evidence are more likely to be acquired in Europe, than in India.

The man who employs himself in treasuring up, by means of perception and his languages, the greatest portion of knowledge in regard to India, is he who

employs the greatest portion of his life, in the business of observing; and in making himself familiar with the languages. But the mental habits which are acquired in mere observing, and in the acquisition of languages, are almost as different as any mental habits can be, from the powers of combination, discrimination, classification, judgment, comparison, weighing, inferring, inducting, philosophizing in short; which are the powers of most importance for extracting the precious ore from a great mine of rude historical materials.

Whatever is worth seeing or hearing in India, can be expressed in writing. As soon as every thing of importance is expressed in writing, a man who is duly qualified may attain more knowledge of India, in one year, in his closet in England, than he could obtain during the course of the longest life, by the use of his eyes and his ears in India.

As soon as the testimony is received of a sufficient number of witnesses, to leave no room for mistake from the partial or the erroneous statements which they may have separately made, it is hardly doubtful, that a man, other circumstances being equal, is really better qualified for forming a correct judgment on the whole, if his information is totally derived from testimony, than if some little portion of it is derived from the senses. It is well known, how fatal an effect on our judgments is exerted by those impulses, called partial impressions; in other words, how much our conceptions of a great whole are apt to be distorted, and made to disagree with their object, by an undue impression, received from some particular part. Nobody needs to be informed, how much more vivid, in general, is the conception of an object which has been presented to our senses, than that of an object which we have only heard another man describe. Nobody, therefore, will deny, that, of a great scene, or combination of scenes, when some small part has been seen, and the knowledge of the rest has been derived from testimony, there is great danger, lest the impression received from the senses should exert an immoderate influence, hang a bias on the mind, and render the conception of the whole erroneous.

If a man were to lay down the plan of preparing himself for writing the

history of India, by a course of observation in the country, he must do one of two things. Either he must resolve to observe minutely a part; or he must resolve to take a cursory view of the whole. Life is insufficient for more. If his decision is, to observe minutely; a very small portion comparatively is all that he will be able to observe. What aid he can derive from this, in writing a history, has partly been already unfolded, and may for the rest be confided to the reflections of the intelligent reader.

What I expect to be insisted upon with greatest emphasis is, that, if an observer were to take an expansive view of India, noting, in his progress, those circumstances alone which are of greatest importance, he would come with peculiar advantage to the composition of a history; with lights capable of yielding the greatest assistance in judging even of the evidence of others. To estimate this pretension correctly, we must not forget a well-known and important law of human nature. From this we shall see, that a cursory view, of the nature of that which is here described, is a process, in the highest degree effectual, not for removing error, and perfecting knowledge, but for strengthening all the prejudices, and confirming all the prepossessions or false notions, with which the observer sets out. This result is proved by a very constant experience; and may further be seen to spring, with an almost irresistible necessity, from the constitution of the human mind. In a cursory survey, it is understood, that the mind, unable to attend to the whole of an infinite number of objects, attaches itself to a few; and overlooks the multitude that remain. But what, then, are the objects to which the mind, in such a situation, is in preference attracted? Those which fall in with the current of its own thoughts; those which accord with its former impressions; those which confirm its previous ideas. These are the objects to which, in a hasty selection, all ordinary minds are directed, overlooking the rest. For what is the principle in the mind by which the choice is decided? Doubtless that of association. And is not association governed by the predominant ideas? To this remains to be added, the powerful influence of the affections; the well known pleasure, which a man finds, in meeting, at every

step, with proofs that he is in the right, and the eagerness with which he is thence inspired to look out for that source of satisfaction ; the well-known aversion, on the other hand, which a man usually has, to meet with proofs that he is in the wrong, and the readiness with which he obeys the temptation, to overlook such disagreeable objects.

He who, without having been a percipient witness in India, undertakes, in Europe, to digest the materials of Indian history, is placed, with regard to the numerous individuals who have been in India, and of whom one has seen and reported one thing, another has seen and reported another thing, in a situation very analogous to that of the Judge, in regard to the witnesses who give their evidence before him. In the investigation of any of those complicated scenes of action, on which a judicial decision is sometimes required, one thing has commonly been observed by one witness, another thing has been observed by another witness ; the same thing has been observed in one point of view by one, in another point of view, by another witness ; some things are affirmed by one, and denied by another. In this scene, the judge, putting together the fragments of information which he has severally received from the several witnesses, marking where they agree and where they differ, exploring the tokens of fidelity in one, of infidelity in another ; of correct conception in one, of incorrect conception in another ; comparing the whole collection of statements with the general probabilities of the case, and trying it by the established laws of human nature, endeavours to arrive at a complete and correct conception of the complicated transaction, on which he is called to decide. Is it not understood, that in such a case as this, where the sum of the testimony is abundant, the judge, who has seen no part of the transaction, has yet, by his investigation, obtained a more complete and correct conception of it, than is almost ever possessed by any one of the individuals from whom he has derived his information ? *

* The Indians themselves have a striking apologue to illustrate the superiority of the comprehensive student over the partial observer.

“ One day in conversation,” says Mr. Ward, “ with the Sūṅskritū head pūṇḍit of the College

But, if a life, in any great degree devoted to the collecting of facts by the senses and the acquiring of tongues, is thus incompatible with the acquisition of that knowledge, and those powers of mind, which are most conducive to a masterly treatment of evidence; it is still less compatible with certain other endowments, which the discharge of the highest functions of the historian imperiously demands. Great and difficult as is the task of extracting perfectly the light of evidence from a chaos of rude materials, it is yet not the most difficult of his operations, nor that which requires the highest and rarest qualifications of the mind. It is the business of the historian not merely to display the obvious outside of things; the qualities which strike the most ignorant observer, in the acts, the institutions, and ordinances, which form the subject of his statements. His duty is, to convey just ideas of all those objects; of all the transactions, legislative, administrative, judicial, mercantile, military, which he is called upon to describe. But in just ideas of great measures what is implied? A clear discernment, undoubtedly, of their causes; a clear discernment

of Fort William, on the subject of God, this man, who is truly learned in his own Shastris, gave the author, from one of their books, the following parable:—In a certain country, there existed a village of blind men, who had heard of an amazing animal called the elephant, of the shape of which, however, they could procure no idea. One day an elephant passed through the place: the villagers crowded to the spot where the animal was standing; and one of them seized his trunk, another his ear, another his tail, another one of his legs. After thus endeavouring to gratify their curiosity, they returned into the village, and sitting down together, began to communicate their ideas on the shape of the elephant, to the villagers: the man who had seized his trunk said, he thought this animal must be like the body of the plantain tree; he who had touched his ear was of opinion, that he was like the winnowing fan; the man who had laid hold of his tail said, he thought he must resemble a snake; and he who had caught his leg declared, he must be like a pillar. An old blind man, of some judgment, was present, who, though greatly perplexed in attempting to reconcile these jarring notions, at length said—You have all been to examine the animal, and what you report, therefore, cannot be false: I suppose, then, that the part resembling the plantain tree must be his trunk; what you thought similar to a fan must be his ear; the part like a snake must be the tail; and that like a pillar must be his leg. In this way, the old man, uniting all their conjectures, made out something of the form of the elephant." *A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos.* By the Rev. W. Ward. Introd. p. lxxxvii. London Ed. 1817.

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of their consequences ; a clear discernment of their natural tendencies ; the circumstances likely to operate either in combination with these tendencies, or in opposition to them. To qualify a man for this great duty, any kind or degree of knowledge is not demanded ; hardly any amount of knowledge, which it is within the competence of one man to acquire, will be sufficient as enough. It is plain, for example, that he requires the most profound knowledge of the laws of human nature, which is the end, as well as instrument of every thing. It is plain, that he requires the most perfect comprehension of the principles of human society ; or the course, into which the laws of human nature impel the human being, in his gregarious state, or when formed into a complex body along with others of his kind. It is plain, that he requires a clear comprehension of the practical play of the machinery of government ; that, in like manner as the general laws of motion are counteracted or modified by friction, the power of which may yet be accurately ascertained and provided for, so he may correctly appreciate the counteraction which the general laws of human nature may receive from individual or specific variations, and what allowance for it his anticipations and conclusions ought to enter. In short, the whole field of human nature, the whole field of legislation, the whole field of judicature, the whole field of administration, down to war, commerce, and diplomacy, ought to be familiar to his mind.*

What, then ? it will be said, and most reasonably said, do you hold yourself up, as the person in whom all these high qualifications are adequately combined ? No. And I am well assured, that by not one of those by whom I shall be criticized, not even of those by whom I shall be treated with the greatest severity, will the distance between the qualifications which I possess, and the qualifications which are desirable in the writer of a history, be estimated at more than it is estimated by myself. But the whole of my life, which I may, without se-

* Aux yeux d'un philosophe, les faits composent la partie la moins intéressante de l'histoire. C'est la connoissance de l'homme ; la morale, et la politique qu'il y trouve, qui la releyent au dessus de son esprit. Gibbon, Mem. sur la Monarchie des Medes, Misc. Works, iii. 126. Ed. 8vo.

pronounce a laborious one, has been devoted to the acquisition of those qualifications; and I am not unwilling to confess, that I deemed it probable I should be found to possess them in a greater degree than those, no part of whose life, or a very small part, had been applied to the acquisition of them. I was also of opinion, that if no body appeared, with higher qualifications, to undertake the work, it was better it should be done imperfectly, better it should be done even as I might be capable of doing it, than not done at all.

Among the many virtues which have been displayed by the Company's servants, may justly be enumerated the candour with which they themselves confess the necessity under which they are laid, of remaining to a great degree ignorant of India. That they go out to their appointments, at a time of life when a considerable stock of general knowledge cannot possibly have been acquired, is a fact which nobody will dispute. And they are the foremost to declare, that their situation in India is such, as to preclude them from the acquisition of local knowledge. Notwithstanding the high degree of talent, therefore, and even of literary talent, which many of them have displayed, more than some very limited portion of the history of India none of them has ventured to undertake.*

"When we consider," said Lord Teignmouth, in his celebrated Minute on the Revenues of Bengal, "the nature and magnitude of our acquisition, the characters of the people placed under our dominion, their difference of language, and dissimilarity of manners; that we entered upon the administration of the government ignorant of its former constitution, and with little practical experience in Asiatic finance, it will not be deemed surprising that we should have fallen into errors; or if any should at this time require correction.—If we further consider the form of the British government in India, we shall find it ill calculated for the

* The following words are not inapplicable, originally applied to a much more limited subject. *De quibus partibus singulis, quidam separatim scribere maluerunt, velut onus totius corporis veriti, et sic quoque complures de unaquaque earum libros ediderunt: quas ego omnes ausus contéxere, prope infinitum mihi laborem prospicio, et ipsa cogitatione suscepti muneris fatigor. Sed durandum est quia cœpimus; et, si viribus deficiemus, animo tamen perseverandum.* Quint. Inst. Or. lib. 4. Proœm.

speedy introduction of improvement. The members composing it are in a state of constant fluctuation, and the period of their residence often expires, before experience can be acquired, or reduced to practice. Official forms necessarily occupy a large portion of time ; and the constant pressure of business leaves little leisure for study and reflection, without which, no knowledge of the principles and detail of the revenues of this country can be attained. True information is also procured with difficulty, because it is too often derived from mere practice, instead of being deduced from fixed principles.”*

Lord William Bentinck, after being Governor of Fort St. George, and President of the Council at Madras, expresses himself in very pointed terms. “ The result of my own observation, during my residence in India, is, that the Europeans generally know little or nothing of the customs and manners of the Hindoos. We are all acquainted with some prominent marks and facts, which all who run may read : but their manner of thinking ; their domestic habits and ceremonies, in which circumstances a knowledge of the people consists, is I fear in great part wanting to us. We understand very imperfectly their language. They, perhaps, know more of ours ; but their knowledge is by no means sufficiently extensive to give a description of subjects not easily represented by the insulated words in daily use. We do not, we cannot, associate with the natives. We cannot see them in their houses, and with their families. We are necessarily very much confined to our houses by the heat. All our wants and business, which would create a greater intercourse with the natives, is done for us ; and we are, in fact, strangers in the land.”†

* No. 1, Appendix to the Fifth Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the Affairs of the East India Company, in 1810. This passage, the Committee have thought of sufficient importance to be incorporated in their Report.

† Observations of Lord William Bentinck, printed in the Advertisement, prefixed to the “ Description of the Character, &c. of the People of India.” By the Abbé J. A. Dubois, Missionary in the Mysore. If any one should object to the testimony of this Ruler, as that of a man who had not been bred in India, it is to be remembered that the testimony is adduced, as expressing his own opinion, by the translator of that work, whose knowledge of India is not liable to dispute ;

Another servant of the Company, Sir Henry Strachey, distinguished both by his local experience, and by general knowledge, remarking upon the state of judicature, under the English government in India, says, "Another impediment, though of a very different nature from those I have mentioned, and much more difficult to remove, is to me too palpable to be overlooked,—I mean, that arising from Europeans in our situation being necessarily ill qualified, in many points, to perform the duties required of us, as judges and magistrates. This proceeds chiefly from our very imperfect connexion with the natives; and our scanty knowledge, after all our study, of their manners, customs, and languages." "We cannot study the genius of the people in its own sphere of action. We know little of their domestic life, their knowledge, conversation, amusements, their trades, and casts, or any of those national and individual characteristics, which are essential to a complete knowledge of them." "The difficulty we experience in discerning truth and falsehood among the natives, may be ascribed, I think, chiefly, to our want of connexion and intercourse with them; to the peculiarity of their manners and habits; their excessive ignorance of our characters; and our almost equal ignorance of theirs." *

and given to the world as the opinion of the Court of Directors, to whom the manuscript belonged, and under whose authority and direction, it was both translated and published.

* Fifth Report, *ut supra*, p. 534, 562. "It is a fact," says another enlightened observer, "which, however singular and unfortunate, is yet founded in truth, that those persons from whom correct information on these subjects might justly be expected, are generally the least able, from the peculiar circumstances of their situation, to supply it: I mean, the Company's servants.—During the early period of their residence in the East, every hour must be employed, in the acquisition of the languages, in the study of the laws of the country, and the manners of the natives; whilst the latter years of their service are still more unremittingly engrossed, in the discharge of the irksome and arduous duties of their profession." *Considerations on the Present Political State of India*. By Alexander Fraser Tytler, late Assistant Judge in the Twenty-four Pergunnahs, Bengal Establishment, Preface, p. xii. See other passages to the same purpose, Introduction, p. iv, v, xi; also i. 77, 357, 415. And Mr. Tytler quotes with peculiar approbation the passage already given from the Minute of Lord Teignmouth.

"I must beg you always to bear in mind, that when an English gentleman undertakes to give an account of Indian manners and habits of private life, he labours under many disadvant-

One or two things I may venture to affirm that I have done.

I have performed the business of research with a labour, and patience, which it would not be easy to surpass. And I believe there is no point, of great importance, involved in the History of India, which the evidence I have adduced is not sufficient to determine. I am, at the same time, aware, that in regard to some things there are documents which were not within my reach; and, concerning the latter part of the history, in particular, that there are individuals in England, possessed of information, which, in several places, would have rendered the narrative richer, and perhaps more accurate, in matters of detail. If I shall be found to have performed, with any tolerable success, what I had the means of performing, the liberality which distinguishes the gentlemen of India gives me reason to hope, that many of those who are possessed of useful information, but whom it was impossible for me to find out, will not be unwilling to contribute their aid to the improvement of the History of British India.

Having thus placed before me the materials of Indian history in a state, I be-

ages. The obstacles which prevent our ever viewing the natives of India in their domestic circles are great and insuperable; such as, the restrictions of caste on their side; rank and situation on ours, &c. We do not intermarry with them, as the Portuguese did; nor do we ever mix with them, in the common duties of social life, on terms of equality. What knowledge we have of their domestic arrangements has been gained chiefly by inquiry, &c." *Letters written in a Mahratta Camp, &c. by T. D. Broughton, Esq. p. 3.*

See to the same purpose, Sir John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Political History of India, &c. p. 449.*

After adverting to certain erroneous notions on Indian subjects, Lieutenant Moor, the well-informed author of the "Narrative of the Operations of Captain Little's Detachment," observes, "Other opinions, equally correct and entertaining, are indulged by the good people of England; which it is vain to oppose, for the party 'was told so by a gentleman who had been in India;' perhaps a voyage or two; but these, however respectable in their profession, are surely not the persons to receive information from, on the subject of the political characters of the East; no more (nor indeed much less) than some gentlemen who may have resided a few years in India; for we can easily admit the possibility of a person spending many years of his life in the cities of Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay, without knowing much more of the politics, prejudices, &c. of interior states or countries, than if he had never stirred out of London, Dublin, or Edinburgh:" *p. 196.*

lieved, of greater fulness and completeness, than any preceding inquirer, I followed the course of my own thoughts, in the judgments which I formed; not because I vainly imagined my thoughts more valuable than those of all other men, but because the sincere and determined pursuit of truth imposes this rigid law. It would not allow me to give for true the opinion of any man, till I had satisfied myself that it was true; still less to give the opinion of any man for true, when I had satisfied myself that it was not true.

Mr. Locke has declared; that he who follows his own thoughts in writing, can hope for approvers in the small number alone of those who make use of their own thoughts in reading; that, by the rest, "a man is not permitted, without censure, to follow his own thoughts in the search of truth, when they lead him ever so little out of the common road."

If this is the severe condition, under which a man follows his own thoughts, in writing even on abstract and general truths, how much harder must be the lot of him who follows them, in writing of the actions and characters of powerful men, and bodies of men? Conscious, however, that I had been faithful in forming my opinions, I believed that I lay under an indispensable obligation to be faithful in expressing them: "to give them without violation of modesty, but yet with the courage of a man unwilling to betray the rights of reason;" and with that manly plainness, which the sincerity of the historical character appeared to require.

I could not overlook the probable consequences. "*La perfection d'une Histoire,*" says a great judge, "*est d'être désagréable à toutes les sectes, et à toutes les nations; car c'est une preuve que l'auteur ne flatte ni les uns ni les autres, et qu'il a dit à chacun ses vérités.*"*

He who desires to obtain a considerable portion of immediate applause, has two well-known, and well-trodden paths, before him.

The first is, to be a zealot for some particular and powerful party; to pane-

* Bayle, *Eclaircissemens, sur le Dictionnaire.*

gyrize its leaders ; attack its opponents ; place its principles and practices in the fairest possible light ; and labour to bring odium upon the principles and practices of its opponents. This secures the loud and vehement applause of those who are gratified ; and the vehement applause of a great party carries, by contagion, along with it, all, or the greater part, of those, who are not very strongly engaged by their interests or passions on the opposite side.

The next of the easy ways to the acquisition of fame, consists of two principal parts. The first is, “ to wanton, in common topics, where a train of sentiments generally received enables a writer to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest.” * The second is, to deal for ever in compromise ; to give up the half of every opinion and every principle ; go no further in favour of any side of any question, than may be reconcilable in some degree with the good opinion of those who oppose it ; and having written as much on one side, as to extract applause from one set of persons, to turn immediately and write as much on the other, as will extract applause from the opposite sort. This is done, without glaring marks of inconsistency, by avoiding all close encounter with the subject, and keeping to vague and general phrases. And in this manner, by a proper command of plausible language, it is easy to obtain reputation with all parties ; reputation, not only of great talents, but of great moderation, great wisdom, and great virtue. †

If my book were possessed of a much greater share of the titles to applause, than even the partialities of the writer allow him to ascribe to it ; I have travelled so very wide of those beaten paths to success, that my only chance for it depends, I cannot fail to perceive, upon the degree in which real liberality, that is,

* Rambler, No. ii.

† Some considerable reputations have been acquired, by praising every thing in one's own country. And there are many persons who sincerely insist upon it, that a writer ought always to contrive to put his country in the right ; that it is a proof of his not being a friend to it, if he ever puts it in the wrong. This is a motive which I utterly disclaim. This is the way, not to be a friend to one's country, but an enemy. It is to bring upon it the disgrace of falsehood and misrepresentation, in the first instance ; and, next, to afford it all the inducement, in the writer's power, to persevere in mischievous, or in disgraceful courses.

strength of mind, is diffused in the community. I have done enough, doubtless, to secure to myself the malignity of the intemperate, and the narrow-minded, of all parties. I have encouraged myself, however, with the belief, that civilization, and the improvement of the human mind, had, in this country, attained a sufficient elevation to make a book be received as useful, if it was really useful, though it neither exaggerated, nor extenuated, the good, or the evil, of any man, or combination of men: to afford a multitude, in every party, far enough removed from the taint of vulgar antipathies, to yield to an author, who spoke with sincerity, and who, though he has not spoken with a view to gratify any party, or any individual, most assuredly has never spoken with a view to hurt any, a compensation for the hostilities of the lower and more ungenerous portion of every party.

Though I am aware of many defects in the work which I have ventured to offer to the public; and cannot forget how probable it is, that more impartial and more discerning eyes will discover many which are invisible to mine, I shall yet appeal from the sentence of him, who shall judge of me solely by what I have not done. An equitable and truly useful decision would be grounded upon an accurate estimation of what I have done, and what I have not done, taken together.

It will also deserve to be considered, how much was in the power of any individual to compass. In so vast a subject, it was clearly impossible for one man to accomplish every thing. Some things it was necessary to leave, that others might be taken; some things it was necessary to handle but slightly, that others might be treated with greater attention. The geography, for example, alone, would have occupied a life-time. To nicety in the details of geography, I was, therefore, unable to aspire. I followed, without much criticism, the authors whom I was consulting, and was only careful to give, with correctness, that outline and those particulars, which were necessary for understanding completely the transactions recorded in my work. To compensate, as far as possible, for that which, in this department, I myself was unable to perform, I was anxious to afford the reader the advantage of Mr. Arrowsmith's map, by far the finest display which has yet

been made of the geography of India ; and in any discrepancy, if any should appear, between the text and that reduction of his noble map, which is prefixed to the second volume, I desire the reader to be guided rather by the geographer than by the historian.

In the orthography of Indian names, I should not have aimed at a learned accuracy, even if my knowledge of the languages had qualified me for the task. I have not been very solicitous even about uniformity in the same name ; for, as almost every author differs from another in the spelling of Eastern names, it appeared to me to be not altogether useless, that, in a book intended to serve as an introduction to the knowledge of India, a specimen of this irregularity should appear.

There is another apparent imperfection, which I should have more gladly removed. In revising my work for the press, some few instances have occurred, in which I have not been able to verify the references to my authorities. This arose from one of the difficulties of my situation. Unable to command at once the large and expensive number of books, which it was necessary for me to consult, I was often dependent upon accident for the period of my supply ; and, if not provided with the best channels of information, obliged to pursue my inquiries, at the moment, in such as I possessed. It was often, in these cases, useful, for the sake of memory, and of following out the thread of research, to quote, in the first instance, at second hand. When I afterwards obtained the better authority, it was a matter of anxious care to adjust the reference ; but I have met with some instances in which I am afraid the adjustment has not been performed. I mention this, to obviate cavils at the appearance of inaccuracy, where the reality does not exist ; inaccuracy in form, rather than in substance : for I have no apprehension that those who shall trace me with the requisite perseverance will accuse me of wanting either the diligence, or the fidelity of an historian ; and I ought not to have undertaken the task, if I had not possessed the prospect of obtaining, sooner or later, the means of carrying it to completion.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.—Page 102, In the marginal note, *for* inhabited *read* inhabited.

— 106, *line* 1, *for* artificia *read* artificial.

— 108, — 3, *for* are *read* is.

— 109, note *, *line* 6 from the bottom of the page, *for* civ. cv. *read* clxiv; and *for* lib. ii. *read* lib. xi.

— 111, note §, *for* lb. *read* Gentoo Code.

— note **, *for* lb. *read* Menu.

— 117, *line* 12, *for* Bin *read* Bice.

— 118, — 37, *for* principle *read* principles.

— 128, — 3, note †, *for* Brahmen *read* Brahmins.

— 130, — 2, note †, *for* Foster *read* Forster.

— 165, — 6, *for* was *read* is.

— 185, — 1, *before* most, *insert* the.

— 381, *Subjoin to the end of note* †—A still more minute and beautiful illustration of this fact is to be found in Dr. A. Smith's Essay on the History of Astronomy, sect. ii.

— 425, last word, *for* Diophantus *read* Algebra.

— 460, *line* 16, *for* whom *read* who.

— 646, — 17, *for* mendicity *read* mendacity.

— 647, — 6, from the bottom, *for* in every *read* in almost every.

VOL. II.—Page 101. It has been suggested to me, that the allusion to the death of 400 Gentoos, made in the note of the translator of the *Seer Mutakhareen*, may have a stress laid upon it, which I should regret. I copied the note, merely as a specimen of the criticisms which were made on the spot, by persons not partial to the English. This, I conceived, was matter of instruction. But I never meant that any fact should stand, as confirmed, upon the authority of the translator of the *Seer Mutakhareen*; nor will it be so understood by any considerate reader. Had the statement appeared to me to rest upon proof, I should have thought it of sufficient importance to give it a place in the text. I have, since the volume was printed, had reasons given to me, by which I am convinced, that the allusion is not well founded, and that no such catastrophe ever occurred.

— 283, *line* 3, *after* resolved not *insert* merely.

— 681, — 4, *after* believe *insert* it.

VOL. III.—Page 19, *line* 19, *for* million *read* millions.

— 276, — 21, *for* government *read* governments.

— 325, — 19, *for* have *read* hear.

— 374, — 1, first word, *for* transaction *read* transactions.

GLOSSARY.

- ADAWLUT.** Justice, equity ; a court of justice. The terms Dewanny Adawlut, and Foujdarry Adawlut, denote the civil and criminal courts of justice. See Dewanny and Foujdarry.
- AMEER, MEER, EMIR.** A nobleman.
- AMEER UL OMRAH.** Noble of nobles, lord of lords.
- ANNA.** A piece of money, the sixteenth part of a rupee.
- AUMEEN.** Trustee, commissioner. A temporary collector or supervisor, appointed to the charge of a country, on the removal of a Zemindar, or for any other particular purpose of local investigation or arrangement.
- AUMIL.** Agent, officer, native collector of revenue. Superintendant of a district or division of a country, either on the part of the government, Zemindar, or renter.
- AUMILDAR.** Agent, the holder of an office. An intendant and collector of the revenue, uniting civil, military, and financial powers, under the Mahomedan government.
- AURUNG.** The place where goods are manufactured.
- BALA-GHAUT.** Above the Ghauts, in contradistinction to Payeen Ghaut, below the Ghauts. The terms are generally applied to the high table-land in the centre of India, towards its southern extremity.
- BANYAN.** A Hindu merchant, or shop-keeper. The term Banyan is used in Bengal to denote the native who manages the money concerns of the European, and sometimes serves him as an interpreter. At Madras, the same description of persons is called Dubash, which signifies one who can speak two languages.
- BATTA.** Deficiency, discount, allowance. Allowance to troops in the field.
- BAZAR.** Daily market, or market place.
- BEGA.** A land measure equal, in Bengal, to about the third part of an acre.
- BEGUM.** A lady, princess, woman of high rank.
- BICE, VAISYA.** A man of the third Hindu cast, who by birth is a trader, or husbandman.
- BRAHMEN, BRAHMIN, BRAHMAN, BRAMIN.** A divine, a priest ; the first Hindu cast.
- BRINJARIE, BINJARY, BENJARY, BANJARY.** A grain merchant.
- BUNGALOW.** The name used in Bengal, for a species of country-house, erected by Europeans.
- CALY YUG, CALYOOGUM.** The present, or fourth age of the world, according to the chronology of the Hindus.
- CASTE, CAST.** A tribe, or class of people.
- CARAVAN-SERAI.** The serai of the caravan. See Serai and Choultry.
- CAWZI, CAZI, KAZY.** A Mahomedan judge, or justice, who also officiates as a public notary, in attesting deeds, by affixing his seal. The same as the officer we name Cadi, in Turkey.
- CAUZY-UL-CAZAUT.** Judge of judges ; the chief judge, or justice.
- CHANDALA.** One of the names for the most degraded of the Hindu casts.
- CHOKY, CHOKEE.** A chair, seat ; guard, watch. The station of a guard, or watchman. A place where an officer is stationed to receive tolls and customs.
- CHOULTRY.** A covered public building, for the accommodation of passengers.
- CHOUT.** A fourth : a fourth part of sums litigated. Mahratta chout ; a fourth of the revenues, exacted as tribute by the Mahrattas.
- CHUDDAR.** Staff-bearer. An attendant on a man of rank. He waits with a long staff, plaited with silver, announces the approach of visitors, and runs before his master, proclaiming aloud his titles.
- CHUNAM.** Lime.
- CIRCAR.** Head of affairs ; the state or government ; a grand division of a province ; a head man ; a name used by Europeans in Bengal, to denote the Hindu writer and accountant, employed by themselves, or in the public offices.
- COLLURIES, COLEREES.** Salt-works, the places where salt is made.
- COOLIES, COOLY.** Porter, labourer.
- Coss.** A term used by Europeans, to denote a

- road-measure of about two miles, but differing in different parts of India.
- CRORE.** Ten millions.
- CSHATRIYA, KSHATRIYA, CHETTERIE, KHE-
TERT.** A man of the second, or military caste.
- CUTCHERRY.** Court of justice; also the public office where the rents are paid, and other business respecting the revenue transacted.
- CUTWAL, KATWAL.** The chief officer of police in a large town or city, and superintendent of the markets.
- DAR.** Keeper, holder. This word is often joined with another, to denote the holder of a particular office or employment, as Chob-dar, staff-holder; Zemin-dar, land-holder. This compound word, with *i, ee, y*, added to it, denotes the office, as Zemindar-ee.
- DARUGAH.** A superintendent, or overseer; as of the police, the mint, &c.
- DAMM, DAM.** A copper coin, the fortieth part of a rupee.
- DECCAN.** Literally, the south. A term employed by Muhomedan writers, to denote the country between the rivers Nerbuddah and Crishna.
- DECOITS.** Gang-robbers. *Decoity*, gang-robbery.
- DEWAN, DUAN.** Place of assembly. Native minister of the revenue department; and chief justice, in civil causes, within his jurisdiction; receiver-general of a province. The term is also used, to designate the principal revenue servant under an European collector, and even of a Zemindar. By this title, the East India Company are receivers-general of the revenues of Bengal, under a grant from the Great Mogul.
- DEWANNY, DUANNEE.** The office, or jurisdiction of a Dewan.
- DEWANNY COURT OF ADAWLUT.** A court for trying revenue, and other civil causes.
- DOAB, DOOWAB.** Any tract of country included between two rivers.
- DROOG.** A fortified hill or rock.
- DUBASH.** See Banyan.
- DURBAR.** The court, the hall of audience; a levee.
- FAQVEER, FAKIR.** A poor man, mendicant, a religious beggar.
- FIRMAUN, PHIRMAUND.** Order, mandate. An imperial decree, a royal grant, or charter.
- FOUJDAR, FOJEDAR, PHOUSDAR, FOGEDAR.** Under the Mogul government, a magistrate of the police over a large district; who took cognizance of all criminal matters within his jurisdiction, and sometimes was employed as receiver-general of the revenues.
- FOUJDARRY, FOJEDAREE.** Office of a Foujdar.
- FOUJDARRY COURT.** A court for administering the criminal law.
- GHAUT.** A pass through a mountain: applied also to a range of hills, and the ford of a river.
- GHEE.** Clarified butter, in which state they preserve that article for culinary purposes.
- GHIRDAR, GIRDWAR.** An overseer of police, under whom the *goyendas*, or informers, act.
- GOMASTAH.** A commissioner, factor, agent.
- GOOROO, GURU.** Spiritual guide.
- GOYENDA.** An inferior officer of police; a spy, informer.
- GUNGE.** A granary, a depôt, chiefly of grain for sale. Wholesale markets, held on particular days. Commercial depôts.
- GURRY.** A name given to a wall flanked with towers.
- HARAM.** Seraglio, the place where the ladies reside.
- HIRCARRA, HARCARRAH.** A guide, a spy, a messenger.
- HOWDA.** The seat of great men fixed on an elephant, not much unlike the body of a sedan in shape.
- JAGHIRE, JAGHEER.** Literally, the place of taking. An assignment to an individual of the government share of the produce of a portion of land. There were two species of jaghires; one, personal, for the use of the grantee; another, in trust, for some public service, most commonly, the maintenance of troops.
- JAMMA, JUMMA.** Total, amount, collection, assembly. The total of a territorial assessment.
- JAMMABUNDY, JUMMABUNDY.** A written schedule, of the whole of an assessment.
- JEEL, KEEL.** A shallow lake, or morass.
- JINJAL.** A large musket, fixed on a swivel, used in Indian forts, and fired with great precision.
- JUG.** See Yug.
- JUNGLE, JANGLE.** A wood, or thicket; a country over-run with shrubs, or long grass.
- KHALSA.** Pure, unmixed. An office of government, in which the business of the revenue department is transacted: the exchequer. Khalsa lands, are lands, the revenue of which is paid into the exchequer.
- KHAN, CAWN.** A title, similar to that of Lord.
- KHILAUT, KELAUT.** A robe of honour, with which princes confer dignity.
- KILLADAR, KELLADAR.** Warder of a castle; commander of a fort.
- KIST.** Stated payment, instalment of rent.

KUSHOON, CUSHOON. A body of military, corresponding nearest to our term brigade; varying from one to six or eight thousand.

LAC. One hundred thousand.

LASCAR. Properly a camp-follower, but applied to native sailors and artillery-men.

LIMBER. A low two-wheeled carriage, on which the trail of a gun is fixed when travelling: it is released in a moment if wanted to fire, which is called unlimbering: the cattle being yoked to the limber, guns are of course always dragged breech first.

MAAL, MAHL, MEHAL, MHAL. Places, districts, departments. Places, or sources of revenue, particularly of a territorial nature; lands.

MAHA. Great.

MOCURRERY. As applied to lands, it means lands let on a fixed lease.

MOFUSSIL. Separated, particularized; the subordinate divisions of a district, in contradistinction to Saddur, or Sudder, which implies the chief seat of government.

MOFUSSIL DEWANNY ADAWLUT. Provincial court of civil justice.

MOLUNGEE. Manufacturer of salt.

MOOFTY, MUFTEE. The Mahomedan law-officer who declares the sentence.

MONSOON. The rainy season. The periodical winds and rains.

MOOLAVY, MOHLAVEE. A learned and religious man, an interpreter of the Mahomedan law.

MOONSHEE. Letter-writer, secretary. Europeans give this title to the native who instructs them in the Persian language.

MOSQUE. A Mahomedan temple.

MUSNUD. The place of sitting; a seat; a throne, or chair of state.

MUTSEDDY, MUTASEDDEE. Intent upon. Writer, accountant, secretary.

NABOB, NAWAB. Very great deputy, vicerent. The governor of a province under the Mogul government.

NAIB. A deputy.

NAIB NAZIM. Deputy of the Nazim, or Governor.

NAIG, NAIK. A petty military officer.

NAIR. Chief. The Nairs are a peculiar description of Hindus, on the Malabar coast.

NAZIM. Composer, arranger, adjuster. The first officer of a province, and minister of the department of criminal justice.

NIZAM. Order, arrangement; an arranger.

NIZAM UL MULK. The administrator of the empire.

NIZAMUT. Arrangement, government; the office of the Nazim, or Nizam.

NIZAMUT ADAWLUT. The court of criminal justice.

NULLA. Streamlet, water-course.

NUZZER. A vow, an offering; a present made to a superior.

OMRAH. A lord, a grandee, under the Mogul government.

PAGODA. A temple; also the name of a gold coin, in the south of India, valued at eight shillings.

PALANKEEN. A litter in which gentlemen in India recline, and are carried on the shoulders of four men.

PARIAR. A term used by Europeans in India to denote the outcasts of the Hindu tribes.

PATAN. A name applied to the Afghaan tribes.

PESHTWA, PRISHWA. Guide, leader. The prime minister of the Mahratta government.

PEON. A footman, a foot soldier; an inferior officer or servant employed in the business of the revenue, police, or judicature.

PERGUNNAH. A small district, consisting of several villages.

PESHGUSH. A present, particularly to government, in consideration of an appointment, or as an acknowledgement for any tenure. Tribute, fine, quit-rent, advance on the stipulated revenues.

PETTAH. The suburbs of a fortified town.

POLLIGAR, POLYGAR. Head of a village district. Military chieftain in the Peninsula, similar to hill Zemindar in the northern circars.

POLLAM. A district held by a Polligar.

POTAIL. The head man of a village. The term corresponds with that of Mocuddim and Mundul in Bengal.

POTTAH. A lease granted to the cultivators, on the part of government, either written on paper, or engraved with a style on the leaf of the fan palmira tree.

PUNDIT. A learned Brahmen.

PURANA, POORAN. Literally ancient: the name given to such Hindu books as treat of creation in general, with the history of their gods, and ancient heroes.

PYKE. A foot messenger. A person employed as a night-watch in a village, and as a runner or messenger on the business of the revenue.

RAJAH. King, prince, chieftain, nobleman; a title in ancient times given to chiefs of the second or military Hindu tribe only.

RAJEFoot. Literally, son of a king. The name of a warlike race of Hindus.

RANA. A species of rajah.

RANNY, RANEE. Queen, princess, wife of a rajah.

- ROY ROYAN.** A Hindu title given to the principal officer of the Khalsa, or chief treasurer of the exchequer.
- RUPEE.** The name of a silver coin; rated in the Company's accounts, the current rupee at 2s. ; the Bombay rupee at 2s. 3d.
- RYOT.** Peasant, subject; tenant of house or land.
- SAYER.** What moves; variable imposts, distinct from land rent or revenue; consisting of customs, tolls, licenses, duties on goods, also taxes on houses, shops, bazars, &c.
- SEPOY.** A native soldier.
- SERAI.** The same as Choultry.
- SHASTER.** The instrument of government or instruction; any book of instruction, particularly containing divine ordinances.
- SHROFF, SHROF.** A banker, or money-changer.
- SIRDAR.** Chief, captain, head man.
- SOUCAR.** A merchant, or banker; a money-lender.
- SUBAH.** A province, such as Bengal. A grand division of a country, which is again divided into circars, chucklas, pergunnahs, and villages.
- SUBAHDAR.** The holder of the subah, the governor, or viceroy.
- SUBAHDARRY.** The office and jurisdiction of a subahdar.
- SUDDER.** The breast; the fore-court of a house; the chief seat of government, contradistinguished from Mofussil, or interior of the country; the presidency.
- SUDDER DEWANNY ADAWLUT.** The chief civil court of justice under the Company's government, held at the presidency.
- SUDDER NIZAMUT ADAWLUT.** The chief criminal court of justice, under the Company's government.
- SUDRA, SHUDRA, SOODER.** A Hindu of the fourth, or lowest tribe.
- SUNNUD.** A prop, or support; a patent, charter, or written authority for holding either land or office.
- TALOOKDAR.** A holder of a talook, which is a small portion of land; a petty land-agent.
- TANK.** Pond, reservoir.
- TANNAKDAR.** A petty police officer.
- TEEP.** A note of hand; a promissory note given by a native banker, or money-lender, to Zemindars and others, to enable them to furnish government with security for the payment of their rents.
- TEHSILDAR.** Who has charge of the collections. A native collector of a district acting under a European or Zemindar.
- TOPASSES.** Native black Christians, the remains of the ancient Portuguese.
- TOPE.** A grove of trees.
- TUNCAW, TUNKHA.** An assignment on the revenue for personal support, or other purposes.
- TUMBRIL.** A carriage for the gun ammunition.
- VACKEEL, VAQUEEL.** One endowed with authority to act for another. Ambassador, agent sent on a special commission, or residing at a court. Native law pleader, under the judicial system of the Company.
- VIZIR, VIZIER.** Under the Mogul government, the prime minister of the sovereign.
- VEDAS, VEDS, BEEDS.** Science, knowledge. The sacred scriptures of the Hindus.
- YOGIES, JOGIES.** Hindu devotees.
- YUG, JUG, YOOG.** An age; a great period of the Hindus, also a religious ceremony.
- ZEMINDAR.** From two words signifying, earth, land, and holder or keeper. Land-keeper. An officer who, under the Mahomedan government, was charged with the superintendence of the lands of a district, financially considered; the protection of the cultivators, and the realization of the government's share of its produce, either in money or kind.
- ZEMINDARRY.** The office or jurisdiction of a Zemindar.
- ZENANA.** The place where the ladies reside.
- ZILLAH.** Side, part, district, division. A local division of a country, having reference to personal jurisdiction.

N. B. The explanations of the above terms are taken, for the most part, from the Glossary attached to the Fifth Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on Indian affairs, appointed in 1810.

HISTORY

OF

BRITISH INDIA.

BOOK I.

(1527—1707)

Commencement of the British Intercourse with India; and the Circumstances of its Progress, till the Establishment of the Company on a durable Basis by the Act of the sixth of Queen Anne.

LITTLE more than two centuries have elapsed since a few British merchants humbly solicited from the princes of India permission to traffic in their territories. Book I.

The British dominion now embraces nearly the whole of that vast region which extends from Cape Comorin to the mountains of Tibet, and from the mouths of the Brahmapootra to the sources of the Indus.

To collect, from its numerous and scattered sources, the information necessary to give clear and accurate ideas of this great empire, and of the transactions through which it has been acquired, is the object of the present undertaking. It is proposed:

I. To describe the circumstances in which the intercourse of this nation with India commenced, and the particulars of its early progress, till the era when it could first be regarded as placed on a firm and durable basis:

II. To exhibit as accurate a view as possible of the people with whom our countrymen had thus begun to transact—of their character, history, manners,

BOOK I. religion, arts, literature, and laws; as well as of the physical circumstances of climate, soil, and production, in which they were placed:

III. To deduce to the present times a history of the British transactions in relation to India; by recording the train of events; by unfolding the constitution of the East India Company, that body, half political, half commercial, through whom the business has been ostensibly carried on; by describing the nature, progress, and effects of their commercial operations; by exhibiting the legislative proceedings, the discussions and speculations, to which our intercourse with India has given birth; by analysing the schemes of government which have been adopted for our Indian dominions; and by an attempt to discover the character and tendency of that species of relation to one another in which Great Britain and the Indies are placed.

The subject forms an entire, and highly interesting, portion of the British History; and it is hardly possible that the matter should have been brought together, for the first time, without being instructive, however unskilfully the task may have been performed. If the success of the author corresponded with his wishes, he would throw light upon a state of society highly curious, and hitherto commonly misunderstood; upon the history of society, which in the compass of his work presents itself in almost all its stages and all its shapes; upon the principles of legislation, in which he has so many important experiments to describe; and upon interests of his country, of which his countrymen have hitherto remained very much in ignorance, while prejudice usurped and abused the prerogatives of understanding.

CHAP. I.

From the Commencement of the Efforts to begin a Trade with India, till the Change of the Company from a regulated to a joint-stock Company.

THE Portuguese had formed important establishments in India before the British offered themselves as competitors for the riches of the East.

Portuguese
first enjoyed
the trade
to India by
the Cape of
Good Hope.

From the time when Vasco de Gama distinguished his nation by discovering the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, and first reached the coast of Hindustan, a whole century had elapsed, during which, without a rival, they had enjoyed and abused the advantages of superior knowledge and art, amid a feeble

and half-civilized race. They had explored the Indian ocean, as far as Japan ; CHAP. I.
 had discovered its islands, rich with some of the most favourite productions of
 nature ; had achieved the most brilliant conquests ; and by their commerce
 poured into Europe, in unexampled profusion, those commodities of the East on
 which the nations at that time set an extraordinary value.

The circumstances of this splendid fortune had violently attracted the attention
 of Europe. The commerce of India, even when confined to those narrow limits
 which a carriage by land had prescribed, was supposed to have elevated feeble
 states into great ones ; and to have constituted an enviable part in the fortune
 even of the most opulent and powerful ; to have contributed largely to support
 the Grecian monarchies both in Syria and Egypt ; to have retarded the downfall
 of Constantinople ; and to have raised the small and obscure republic of Venice
 to the rank and influence of the most potent kingdoms. The discovery therefore
 of a new channel for this opulent traffic, and the happy experience of the Por-
 tuguese, inflamed the cupidity of all the maritime nations of Europe, and set
 before them the most tempting prospects.

An active spirit of commerce had already begun to display itself in England. Commercial
and nautical
spirit of the
English.
 The nation had happily obtained its full share of the improvement which had
 dawned in Europe ; and the tranquil and economical reign of Elizabeth had been
 favourable both to the accumulation of capital, and to those projects of private
 emolument on which the spirit of commerce depends. A brisk trade, and of consi-
 derable extent, had been carried on during the greater part of the sixteenth century
 with the Netherlands, at that time the most improved and commercial part of
 Europe. The merchants of Bristol had opened a traffic with the Canary Islands ;
 those of Plymouth with the coasts of Guinea and Brazil : the English now fished on
 the banks of Newfoundland ; and explored the sea of Spitzbergen, for the sovereign
 of the waters : they engrossed, by an exclusive privilege, the commerce of Russia :
 they took an active part in the trade of the Mediterranean : the company of
 merchant-adventurers pushed so vigorously the traffic with Germany and the
 central parts of Europe, as highly to excite the jealousy of the Hanse Towns :
 and the protestant inhabitants of the Netherlands and France, flying from the
 persecutions of their own oppressive and bigoted governments, augmented the
 commercial resources of England by the capital and skill of a large importation
 of the most ingenious and industrious people in Europe.*

* Anderson's History of Commerce in the reign of Elizabeth, passim. See also Hakluyt's
 Voyages, ii. 3, 96. Ibid. iii. 690. Guicciardini's Description of the Netherlands. Sir William
 Temple. Camden, 408.

BOOK I.

1527.

Project to
discover a
north-west
passage to
India.

In these circumstances the lustre of the Portuguese transactions in the East peculiarly attracted the admiration of the English. Already a most adventurous spirit of navigation was roused in the nation. The English were the first who had imitated the example of the Spaniards in visiting the New World. In 1497, Cabot, with a small squadron, explored the coast of America from Labrador to Virginia, and discovered the islands of Newfoundland and St. John.* An English merchant, named Robert Thorne, who had been stationed for many years at Seville in Spain, and had acquired particular knowledge of the intercourse which the Portuguese had opened with the East, presented a project to Henry VIII. about the year 1527, the accomplishment of which he imagined would place his country in a situation no less enviable than that of the Portuguese. As that nation had obtained a passage to India by a course to the south-east, and pretended a right, which they defended by force, to its exclusive occupation, he supposed that his countrymen might reach the same part of the globe by sailing to the north-west, and thus obtain a passage at once expeditious and undisputed.† What effect this representation produced on the mind of Henry is not accurately known. But two voyages in the course of his reign were undertaken for the discovery of a north-west passage, one about this period,‡ and another ten years later.§

To discover a
north-east
passage.

Nothing can more clearly prove to us the ardour with which the English coveted a share in the riches supposed to be drawn by the Portuguese from the East, than the persevering efforts which they made to discover a channel from which the Portuguese would have no pretence to exclude them. Two attempts in the reign of Henry to obtain a passage by the north-west had failed: their exploring fancy anticipated a happier issue from a voyage to the north-east. A small squadron, accordingly, under the direction of Sir Hugh Willoughby, was fitted out in the reign of Edward VI.; and, sailing along the coast of Norway, doubled the North Cape,|| where it was encountered by a storm. The ship of Sir Hugh was driven to an obscure spot in Russian Lapland, where he and his crew perished miserably by the climate. The other principal vessel found shelter in the harbour of Archangel, and was the first foreign ship by which it was entered. So well did Chancellour, the captain of the vessel, improve this incident, that he opened a commercial intercourse with the natives,

* Hakluyt, iii. 4. Rymer's *Fœdera*, xii. 595. Anderson's *History of Commerce*, published in Macpherson's *Annals*, ii. 11. Robertson's *History of America*, iv. 138.

† Hakluyt, iii. 129. Harris's *Collection of Voyages*, i. 874.

‡ Hakluyt, *ut supra*.

§ Ibid. 131.

|| Hakluyt, i. 226, &c.

visited the monarch in his capital, stipulated important privileges for his countrymen; and laid the foundation of a trade which was immediately prosecuted to no inconsiderable extent. This voyage but little damped the hopes of obtaining a north-east passage to the riches of India. Some vigorous attempts were made by the company in whose hands the commerce with Russia was placed;* the last of them in 1580, when two ships were sent out to explore the passage through the straits of Waygatz: after struggling with many perils and difficulties from the ice and the cold, one of the vessels returned unsuccessful; the other was never heard of more.

Before this hope was regarded as desperate, the project of obtaining a passage by the north-west was resumed with ardour. No fewer than six voyages were made in the course of a few years. Two barks of twenty-five tons each, and a pinnace of ten, sailed under Martin Frobisher in the year 1567, and entered Hudson's bay, which at first they imagined was the inlet about to conduct them to the golden shore. The same navigator was encouraged to make a second attempt in the same direction in 1576. As he brought home in these voyages some minerals which were supposed to be impregnated with gold, the attention of government was excited; and two years afterwards Frobisher was sent out with fifteen of the Queen's ships, carrying miners for the supposed ore, and 120 persons as the rudiments of a colony: having spent his provisions, and lost one of his ships, but not found the expected passage, nor left his settlers, he returned with 300 tons of the supposed treasure, which proved to be only a glittering sand.† The nation persevered in its hopes and enterprises. A few years afterwards Captain John Davis sailed as far as 66° 40' north, and discovered the straits distinguished by his name. In a second voyage, undertaken in 1586, he explored in vain the inlet which he had thus discovered. After a few years he was enabled to proceed in a third expedition, which had no better success than the preceding two.‡

After so many efforts to discover a new passage to India, the English resolved to be no longer deterred by the pretensions of the Portuguese. A voyage to China by the Cape of Good Hope was undertaken in 1582. Four ships proceeded to the coast of Brazil, fought with some Spanish men of war, and were obliged to return for want of provisions.§ Another expedition, consisting of three ships,

Voyages
vainly at-
tempted by
the Cape of
Good Hope.

* Anderson's History of Commerce in Macpherson, ii. 166.

† Hakluyt. Anderson, ut supra, ii. 145, 158, 159.

‡ Hakluyt. Anderson, ut supra, ii. 175, 180, 185.

§ Anderson, ut supra, ii. 171.

Book I.
1577.

was fitted out in 1596, the commander of which was furnished with Queen Elizabeth's letters to the Emperor of China. This voyage proved eminently unfortunate. The ships were driven upon the coast of Spanish America, where only four men were preserved alive from the effects of storms, famine, and disease.*

Drake reaches
India by sail-
ing round
Cape Horn.

Amid these unsuccessful endeavours two voyages were accomplished, which animated the hopes of the nation, and pointed out the way to more fortunate enterprises. Francis Drake, the son of a clergyman in Kent, who at a tender age had been put an apprentice to the master of a slender bark trading to the coast of Holland and France, had early evinced that passionate ardour in his profession which is the usual forerunner of signal success.† He gained the affections of his master, who left him his bark at his death; at the age of eighteen he was purser of a ship which sailed to the bay of Biscay; at twenty he made a voyage to the coast of Guinea; in 1565 he ventured all he possessed in a voyage to the West Indies, which had no success; and in 1567 he served under his kinsman Sir John Hawkins, in his unprosperous expedition to the bay of Mexico. In these different services, his nautical skill, his courage and sagacity, had been conspicuously displayed. In 1570 his reputation enabled him to proceed to the West Indies with two vessels under his command. So bent was he on executing some great design, that he renewed his visit the next year, for the sole purpose of obtaining information. He had no sooner returned than he planned an expedition against the Spaniards, executed it with two ships and seventy-three men, sacked the town of Nombre de Dios, and returned with great treasure. It is said that, in this voyage, he saw from the top of a high tree, i. e. fancied he saw, across the American isthmus, the Southern Ocean, and became inflamed with the desire of sailing to it in a ship of England.

For this expedition he prepared on a great scale: obtaining the commission of the Queen; and five vessels, one of 100 tons, another of eighty, one of fifty, another of thirty, and a pinnace of fifteen; manned with 164 select sailors. The historians of his voyage are anxious to display the taste and magnificence, as well as judgment, of his preparations; expert musicians, rich furniture, utensils of the most curious workmanship, all the vessels of his table silver, and many of those of his cook-room.

The expedition sailed from Plymouth on the 13th of December, 1577. Having passed the Straits of Magellan, and ravaged the western coast of Spanish

* Purchas, b. iii. sect. 2. Anderson, ii. 210.

† Hakluyt, iii. 440. Harris's Collection of Voyages, i. 14. Camden's Annals, 301, &c.

America, Drake feared the encounter of a Spanish fleet should he attempt to return in the same direction, and formed the bold design of crossing the Pacific Ocean to India, and regaining England by the Cape of Good Hope.

CHAP. I.
1577.

With one ship, the only part of the fleet which remained, he steered along the coast of America to the latitude of 38° north, and then entered upon that immense navigation, in which Magellan, the only circumnavigator who preceded him, had suffered so much. No memorable occurrence attended the voyage. Of the islands which have been discovered in the Pacific Ocean none were observed till he approached the Asiatic coast. Fixing his attention on the Moluccas, of which the fame had been circulated in Europe by the rich spices thence imported by the Portuguese, he passed, with little observation, the more eastern part of the numerous islands which stud the Indian seas, and held his course for Tidore. From intelligence, received on the passage, he waved his intention of landing on that island, and steered for Ternate, the sovereign of which he understood to be at enmity with the Portuguese.

The intercourse which he there commenced forms a remarkable epoch in the history of the British in India, as it was the beginning of those commercial transactions which have led to such important results. The King, having received assurances that his new visitants came with no other intention than that of trading with his country, gave them a very favourable reception. This monarch possessed considerable power; since the English navigators were informed that he ruled over seventy islands, besides Ternate, the most valuable of all the Moluccas; and in the visits which they paid to his court they were eye-witnesses that he could display no contemptible share of magnificence. They exchanged presents with him, received him on board, and traded with his subjects; laid in a cargo of valuable spices, and acquainted themselves with the nature and facilities of a commerce which was so much the object of admiration in Europe.

Not satisfied with the information or the commodities which they received on one island, they visited several, being always amazed at their prodigious fertility, and in general delighted with the manners of the inhabitants. Among other places they landed in the great island of Java, famous afterwards as the seat of the Dutch government in India. They held some friendly intercourse with the natives, and departed with a tolerable knowledge both of the character of the people, and the productions of the country.

They now spread their sails for that navigation between Europe and India, to which the Portuguese claimed an exclusive right, and by which they monopolized the traffic with India. Those discoverers had craftily disseminated in

BOOK I.

1580.

Europe terrific accounts of dangers and horrors attending the navigation round the Cape of Good Hope. As the voyage of the English proved remarkably prosperous, they were surprised and delighted with the safety and ease which seemed to them to distinguish this envied passage, and conceived a still more lofty opinion of the advantages enjoyed by the nation that engrossed it. After leaving Java, the first land which they touched was the Cape of Good Hope. They landed once more at Sierra Leone, on the African coast, where they received such supplies as sufficed for the remainder of the voyage. They arrived at Plymouth on Monday the 26th of September, 1580, after a voyage of two years, ten months, and a few days, exhibiting to the wondering eyes of the spectators the first ship in England, and the second in the world, which had circumnavigated the globe. The news quickly spread over the whole kingdom, which resounded with the applauses of the man who had performed so daring and singular an enterprise. Whoever wished to be distinguished as the patron of merit hastened to confer some mark of his admiration on Captain Drake. The songs, epigrams, poems, and other pieces, which were composed in celebration of his exploits, amounted to several collections.* The Queen, after some delay, necessary to save appearances with the Spanish court, which loudly complained of the depredations of Drake, though as reprisals perhaps they were not undeserved, paid a visit in person to the wonderful ship at Deptford; accepted of an entertainment on board, and conferred the honour of knighthood on its captain; observing, at the same time, that his actions did him more honour than his title.†

We may form some conception of the ardour which at that time prevailed in England for maritime exploits, by the number of men of rank and fortune, who chose to forego the indulgences of wealth, and to embark their persons and properties in laborious, painful, and dangerous expeditions. Among them we find such names as those of the Earls of Cumberland and Essex, of Sir Richard Greenville, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Humphry Gilbert, Sir Robert Dudley, who prepared squadrons at their own expense, and sailed to various parts of the

* Harris is not satisfied with the merit of these productions, which reached not, in his opinion, the worth of the occasion; and seems to be rather indignant that no modern poet has rivalled the glory of Homer, "by displaying in verse the labours of Sir Francis Drake:" i. 20.

† Her Majesty appears to have been exquisitely gracious. The crowd which thronged after her was so great that the bridge, which had been constructed between the vessel and the shore, broke down with the weight, and precipitated 200 persons into the water. As they were all extricated from their perilous situation without injury, the Queen remarked that so extraordinary an escape could be owing only to the Fortune of Sir Francis Drake. Harris, i. 20.

world. No undertaking of this description was attended with more important circumstances than that of Thomas Cavendish. CHAP. I.

This gentleman, descended from a family of distinction, and inheriting a large estate in the county of Suffolk, had been early fired with a passion for maritime adventure: in a vessel of his own, he had accompanied Sir Richard Greenville in his unsuccessful voyage to Virginia; and now sold or mortgaged his estate, to equip a squadron with which he might rival the glory of Drake. It consisted of three ships, the largest of 140 tons, one of sixty, and a bark of about forty, supplied with two years' provisions, and manned with 126 officers and sailors, of whom several had served in the celebrated expedition of Drake. 1586.
Also Caven-
dish.

They sailed from Plymouth on the 21st of July, 1586. Their voyage through the Straits of Magellan, and the depredations which they proceeded to commit along the western coast of the American continent, not only in the spirit of avarice, but even of wanton devastation, form no part of our present subject, and may without regret be left to other inquirers. They had reached the coast of California, and nearly 24° of northern latitude; when, having taken a very rich Spanish ship, and completed their schemes of plunder, they commenced their voyage across the Pacific Ocean. They left the coast of America on the 19th of November, and came in sight of Guam, one of the Ladrone islands, on the 3d of January. From this island they were visited by sixty or seventy canoes full of the inhabitants, who brought provisions to exchange for commodities, and so crowded about the ship, that the English, when they had finished their traffic, discharged some of their fire-arms to drive them away.* With the Philippines, to which they next proceeded, they opened a more protracted intercourse. They cast anchor at one of the islands, and lay there for nine days, during which they carried on an active trade with the inhabitants.

The cluster of islands to which the Europeans have given the name of the Philippines was discovered by Magellan. Philip II., shortly after his accession to the Spanish throne, planted there a colony of Spaniards, by an expedition from New Spain; and a curious commerce had from that time been carried on across the Great Pacific between this settlement and the dominions of

* I am sorry to observe that no great respect for human life seems to have been observed in this proceeding: since, directly implying that the guns had been charged with shot, and levelled at the men, the historian of the voyage jocosely remarks, "that 'tis ten to one if any of the savages were killed; for they are so very nimble that they drop immediately into the water, and dive beyond the reach of all danger, upon the least warning in the world." Harris's Collect. of Voyages, i. 27.

BOOK I.

1588.

Spain in the new world. To Manilla, the capital of the Philippine colony, the Chinese, who resorted thither in great numbers, brought all the precious commodities of India; and two ships were sent annually from New Spain, which carried to the Philippines the silver of the American mines, and returned with the fine productions of the East. The impatience, however, of the natives under the Spanish yoke, was easily perceived. When they discovered that the new visitors were not Spaniards, but the enemies of that people, they eagerly testified their friendship; and the princes of the island, where Cavendish landed, engaged to assist him with the whole of their forces, if he would return, and make war upon the common adversary.

This adventurous discoverer extensively explored the intricate navigation of the Indian Archipelago, and observed the circumstances of the new and extraordinary scene with a quick and intelligent eye. He visited the Ladrões; pursued a roving course among the Philippines, which brought most of them within his view; he passed through the Moluccas; sailed along that important chain of islands, which, extending from the Strait of Malacca, bounds the Indian Archipelago to the extremity of Timor; and passing the Strait of Bally, between the two Javas, cast anchor on the south-west side of the great island of that name. He traded here with the natives for provisions, and formed with them a sort of treaty, stipulating a favourable reception whenever his visit should be renewed.

He sailed for the Cape of Good Hope on the 16th of March, careful to treasure up information respecting a voyage which was now the channel of so important an intercourse. He made astronomical observations; he studied the weather, the winds, and the tides; he noted the bearing and position of lands; and omitted nothing which might facilitate a repetition of the voyage to himself or any of his countrymen. He passed the Cape with prosperous navigation about the middle of May, and, having touched at St. Helena to recruit his stores, he landed at Plymouth on the 9th of September, 1588. In the letter which, on the very day of his arrival, he wrote to Lord Hunsdon, then Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth, he says, "I navigated to the islands of Philippines, hard upon the coast of China, of which country I have brought such intelligence as hath not been heard of in these parts; a country, the stateliness and riches of which I fear to make report of, lest I should not be credited. I sailed along the islands of Moluccas, where, among some of the heathen people, I was well entreated, and where our countrymen may have trade as freely as the Portugals, if they themselves will."

The tide of maritime adventure which these splendid voyages were calculated to increase, flowed naturally towards India, by reason of the fancied opulence of the East, and the passion for Indian commodities which prevailed at that time in Europe. The impatience of our countrymen had already engaged them in a circuitous traffic with that part of the globe. They sailed to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, where they found cargoes of Indian goods conveyed over land; and a mercantile company, denominated the Levant Company, was instituted, according to the policy of the age, to secure to the nation the advantages of so important a commerce.* The Company too which, after the discovery of the port of Archangel, had been formed to carry on the trade with Russia, had opened a communication with Persia, whence they imported Indian goods to satisfy the demand of the English. Mr. Anthony Jenkinson, an active and enterprising agent of the Russia Company, sailed down the Volga, in 1558, to the Caspian Sea, which he crossed into Persia, and at Boghar, a city of some importance, found merchants from various parts of the Persian empire, from Russia, from India, and China. This voyage he performed seven times; and opened a considerable trade for raw and wrought silk, for carpets, spices, precious stones, and other Asiatic productions. In 1563, there was business enough to require the presence of three agents at Casbin, the seat of the Persian court; and the traffic flourished for several years.

CHAP. I.
1593.

Accidental circumstances contributed to enliven the admiration excited by the Indian trade. During that expedition to the coast of Spain, on which Sir Francis Drake was sent by Queen Elizabeth, to harass the Spanish shipping, and prevent as far as possible the preparations for the Invincible Armada, he took one of the Portuguese ships from India, known at that time by the name of Carracks. The value of her cargo inflamed the imaginations of the merchants; and the papers which she carried afforded information respecting the traffic in which she was engaged.† A still more important capture of the same sort was made in 1593. An expedition, fitted out for the West Indies by Sir Walter Raleigh, and commanded by Sir John Boroughs, encountered near the Azores the greatest of all the Portuguese Carracks, a vessel of 1,600 tons, carrying 700 men, and thirty-six brass cannon, and after an obstinate contest cap-

Capture of
two Portu-
guese East
Indiamen.

* Monson's Naval Tracts. Hakluyt. Anderson's Hist. of Com. published in Macpherson's Annals, ii. 169, 198. Rymer's Fœdera.

† This is not a conclusion merely drawn from the circumstances of the case, which however would sufficiently warrant it; but stated on the testimony of Cambden, who related what he heard and saw. Cambden's Annals. Anderson's Hist. of Commerce.

BOOK I.

1593.

Travels in
India by
members of
the Turkey
Company.

ried her into Dartmouth. She was the largest vessel ever seen in England, laden with spices, calicoes, silks, gold, pearls, drugs, porcelain, ebony, &c., and by her riches inflamed the impatience of the English to be engaged in so opulent and brilliant a commerce.*

Some members of the Turkey or Levant Company finished about the same time an expedition into India.† They had carried some cloth, tin, and other goods from Aleppo to Bagdat, which they next conveyed down the Tigris to Ormus in the Persian Gulf, and thence transported to Goa, the great mart between the Portuguese and Indians on the coast of Malabar. From this place they commenced an extensive survey of the adjoining countries; repaired to Agra, at that time the capital and residence of the Mogul Emperor; visited Lahor; traversed Bengal; travelled to Pegu and Malacca; and, returning by sea to Ormus, retraced their steps to Aleppo, whence they sailed for England, bearing with them important and extensive information respecting the countries they had explored. Intelligence now poured itself upon the nation by a variety of channels. An Englishman, of the name of Stevens, had sailed with the Portuguese from Lisbon to Goa, by the Cape of Good Hope, and wrote an account of his voyage, which was read with avidity, and contributed to swell the general current of enterprise which now ran so vehemently toward India.‡

First applica-
tion to Go-
vernment in
1589.

The first application which was made to government was by a memorial, in the name of "divers merchants," addressed to the Lords of Council, in 1589, for the royal permission to send three ships, and as many pinnaces, on a voyage to India. They enumerated the different places, at which the Portuguese had already effected settlements, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, in Malacca, and in the Banda and Molucca islands, places from which it seemed to be tacitly understood that other nations were bound to abstain. But they added, that the islands and shores of the Indian ocean presented many other places which were open to the enterprise of the English merchants, and from an intercourse with which the nation might reap the greatest advantage.§ What reception this application received is little known. But the unfortunate expedition of Captain Raymond, remarkable as being the first of which India was

* Anderson's Hist. of Commerce in Macpherson's Annals, ii. 201.

† They returned to London in 1591. Anderson, ut supra, ii. 198.

‡ Harris's Voyages, i. 875.

§ This Memorial is preserved in the State Paper Office, and a short account of it has been given us by Mr. Bruce, Annals of the East India Company, i. 109.

the immediate destination, though its object was not so much trade as plunder, by cruising against the Portuguese, was fitted out in 1591. Disease had made such ravages among the crews, before they reached the Cape of Good Hope, that one of the vessels was obliged to be sent home with the sick; and the rest, two in number, had not long doubled the Cape, when the principal ship was lost in a storm. Captain James Lancaster, in the remaining vessel, after a disastrous voyage to the East, sailed to the West Indies, where he lost the ship, and with great difficulty found means to return in a French privateer.*

CHAP. I.
1599.

But while the English fluctuated between desire and execution in this important project, the Dutch, in 1595, boldly sent four ships to trade with India by the Cape of Good Hope.† This exploit added fuel at once to the jealousy and the ambition of the English. In 1599, an association was formed, and a fund subscribed, which amounted to 30,133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, and consisted of 101 shares, the subscriptions of individuals varying from 100*l.* to 3,000*l.* It was agreed to petition the Queen for a warrant to fit out three ships, and export bullion; and also for a charter of privileges. A committee of fifteen, the origin and foundation of a Court of Directors, were chosen to manage. The approbation of the government was readily signified; but, as a treaty was then pending with Spain, policy counselled delay. The subscribers, known by the name of the adventurers, were impatient; and presented a memorial, setting forth the places with which the Spaniards and Portuguese had established an intercourse, and pointing out other parts to which, without any ground of complaint on the part of those nations, the English might with unspeakable advantage resort. The council replied, that “it was more beneficiall for the generall state of merchandise to entertayne a peace, then that the same should be hindered, by the standing wth y^e Spanishe com̃issioñs, for the mayntayning of this trade, to forgoe the oportunety of the concluding of the peace.”‡ The memorial was referred to Sir Foulke Greville, who made a favourable report: and in the course of the same year, the Queen sent John Mildenhall over land by Constantinople on an embassy to the Mogul.

First association and subscription, 1599.

It was attended with little success. The Portuguese and Venetian agents exerted themselves to raise suspicions against the designs of the English, and effectually obstructed the endeavours of the ambassador.

* Anderson's Hist. of Commerce in Macpherson's Annals, ii. 199. Harris's Voyages, i. 875.

† Anderson, ut supra, ii. 209. Harris's Voyages, i. 920.

‡ Minutes, &c. (Indian Register Office.) Bruce's Annals, i. 112.

Book I.

1600.

Towards the end of the year 1600 the efforts of the adventurers were renewed. The consent of government to proceed in preparations for an Indian voyage was obtained, while the patent of incorporation was still under consideration. Meanwhile an application was made from government, with what view does not appear, for the employment of Sir Edward Michelbourne in the expedition. The answer of the committee, whose situation (that of petitioners for a favour not yet conceded) might have counselled complaisance, affords a curious specimen of their independence, and of the mode of thinking of the times. They stated it as their resolution "not to employ any *gentleman* in any place of charge," and requested "that they may be allowed to sort their business with men of their own qualitye, lest the suspicion of the employ^{mt} of *gentlemen* being taken hold upon by the generalitie, do dryve a great number of the adventurers to withdraw their contributions."* The adventure was prosecuted with ardour. On the 8th of October the five following ships were already provided; the *Malice Scourge*, of 200 men, and 600 tons burden; the *Hector*, of 100 men, and 300 tons; the *Ascension*, of eighty men, and 260 tons; the *Susan*, of eighty men, and 240 tons; and a pinnace of forty men, and 100 tons. To provision these ships for twenty months the cost was computed at 6,600*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.*; and the cargo, consisting of iron and tin, wrought and unwrought, of lead, cloths, and some smaller articles, chiefly intended as presents for the persons in power at the different places at which the ships might touch, was estimated, exclusive of bullion, at 4,545*l.* It was determined that thirty-six factors or super-cargoes should be appointed for the voyage, divided into separate classes, rising above one another in trust and emoluments. Captain James Lancaster, whose difficult return from a predatory expedition to the Indian seas has already been mentioned, was chosen to command the fleet; and on the 31st of December the charter of privileges was obtained.†

First charter,
1600.

This charter, the origin of a power so anomalous and important as that which was afterwards accumulated in the hands of the East India Company, contained nothing which remarkably distinguished it from the other charters of incorporation, so commonly in that age bestowed upon trading associations. It constituted the adventurers a body politic and corporate by the name of "the Governor and Company of Merchants of London, trading to the East

* Minutes of a General Court of Adventurers, preserved in the Indian Register Office. Bruce's Annals, i. 128.

† Bruce's Annals, i. 129—136. Anderson's History of Commerce in Macpherson's Annals, ii. 216. Harris's Collection of Voyages, i. 875.

Indies," and vested them with the usual privileges and powers. The plan which they had already adopted for the management of their affairs, by a committee of twenty-four, and a chairman, both to be chosen annually, was confirmed and rendered obligatory. With a reservation in favour of the rights granted to other associations, and with prohibition extending to all such places as might be already occupied by the subjects of states in amity with her Majesty, and whose objection to rivals should be declared; the privilege of trading to the East Indies, that is, to all places beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan; was bestowed upon the Company; with power to export in each voyage 30,000*l.* in gold and silver, to export English goods for the first four voyages exempt from duties, and to re-export Indian goods in English ships under the same privilege to the end of the charter. According to the principle of the times, the charter was exclusive; prohibiting the rest of the community from trading within the limits, but granting to the Company the power, whenever they pleased, of bestowing licenses for that purpose. It was granted for a period of fifteen years; but under condition that, if not found to be advantageous to the country, it might be annulled at any time after a notice of two years. If advantageous to the country, it might, if desired by the Company, be renewed for fifteen years.

CHAP. I.
1601.

The ardour of individuals, where any thing is to be risked, is more easily excited than upheld. Though the list of subscribers, while the scheme of Indian adventure was yet only in contemplation, had been readily filled up, the calls of the committees for the payment of the instalments were very imperfectly obeyed. Even when the charter was obtained, it was either understood to confer no power of compelling payment, or the directors were afraid to make use of that power. Instead of exacting the stipulated sums, and trading upon the terms of a joint-stock company, the subscribers who were disposed to adventure were invited to take upon themselves the expense of the voyage, and, as they sustained the whole of the risk, to reap the whole of the profit.

The sums which were thus advanced amounted to 68,373*l.* which greatly exceeded the capital originally subscribed. Of this, 39,771*l.* was expended in the purchase and equipment of ships—the four, excluding the pinnace, which were taken up by the committee of original adventurers: 28,742*l.* was expended in bullion: and 6,860*l.* in goods; consisting partly of British commodities, cloth, lead, tin, cutlery, glass, &c.; partly of foreign, as quicksilver, Muscovy hides, &c. The choice of Captain Lancaster to command the fleet was renewed; and it sailed from Torbay on the 2d of May, 1601, carrying letters of recommen- First voyage
in 1601.

Book I.

1603.

datations from the Queen to the sovereigns of the different ports to which it might resort.*

A first and experimental attempt was naturally unproductive of any remarkable result: but the first voyage of the East India Company was not discouraging. The first place in India to which the fleet repaired was Acheen, a principal city in the island of Sumatra, at which they were favourably received. They formed a treaty of commerce with the chief or sovereign of the place; obtained permission to erect a factory; and, having taken on board a quantity of pepper, set sail for the Moluccas. In the Straits of Malacca they captured a Portuguese vessel of 900 tons burthen, carrying calicoes and spices, which sufficed to lade them. They diverted their course, therefore, to Bantam in the island of Java, where the Captain, delivering his letters and presents, and meeting with a favourable reception, left some agents, the first rudiments of the Company's factories; and returned to England, where he arrived in September, 1603, with a handsome profit to his owners on the capital of the voyage.†

The eight succeeding voyages, 1603—1613.

In the course of the years from 1603 to 1613, eight other voyages were fitted out, on similar terms. The first in 1603, under the command of Captain Middleton, consisted of the ships which had but just returned from the preceding voyage: and the capital subscribed was 60,450*l.*; of which 48,140*l.* was laid out in the preparation and provision of the ships; 11,160*l.* in bullion, and 1,142*l.* in goods. The second, in 1606, consisted of three ships commanded by

* Bruce's Annals, i. 146. "But forasmuch," says Sir William Monson (Naval Tracts, iii. Churchill's Collection of Voyages, 475), "as every innovation commonly finds opposition, from some out of partiality, and from others as enemies to novelty; so this voyage, though at first it carried a great name and hope of profit, by the word India, and example of Holland, yet was it writ against." He then exhibits the objections, seven in number, and subjoins an answer. The objections were shortly as follows, the answers, may be conceived:

1. The trade to India would exhaust the treasure of the nation by the exportation of bullion.
2. It would consume its mariners by an unhealthy navigation.
3. It would consume its ships by the rapid decay produced in the southern seas.
4. It would hinder the vent of our cloth, now exported in exchange for the spices of the foreign merchants.
5. It was a trade of which the returns would be very slow.
6. Malice to the Turkey Company was the cause of it, and jealousy and hatred from the Dutch would be the unhappy effect.
7. It would diminish the Queen's customs, by the privilege of exporting bullion duty free.

These objections, with the answers, may also be seen in Anderson's History of Commerce, *ad an.*

† Harris, i. 875. Anderson, *ut supra*, ii. 217, 218. Bruce's Annals, i. 151, 152.

Captain Keeling; capital, 53,500*l.*; of which 28,620*l.* was for the equipment of the fleet, 17,600*l.* bullion, and 7,280*l.* goods. The third, in 1607, consisted of two ships, 33,000*l.* capital; 14,600*l.* of which for the ships, 15,000*l.* bullion, and 3,400*l.* in goods. The fourth voyage, in 1608, had but one ship; 13,700*l.* subscription; expense of equipment, 6,000*l.*; bullion, 6,000*l.*; goods, 1,700*l.* The fifth, in 1609, had three ships, larger than in any former voyage; capital subscribed 82,000*l.*; cost of shipping, 32,000*l.*; the investment, 28,500*l.* bullion, and 21,300*l.* goods. The sixth voyage, in 1610, had four ships; and subscription, 71,581*l.*; divided into 42,500*l.* for shipping, 19,200*l.* bullion, 10,081*l.* goods. The seventh, in 1611, of four vessels, had 76,355*l.* subscription, expended 48,700*l.* on the fleet, 17,675*l.* in bullion, and 10,000*l.* in goods. The eighth, in 1612, had one ship, and subscription 7,200*l.*; divided, 5,300*l.* for the vessel, 1,250*l.* bullion, and 650*l.* in goods. All these voyages, with one exception, that in 1607, of which both the vessels were lost, were prosperous: the clear profits, hardly ever below 100 per cent, being in general more than 200 on the capital of the voyage.*

The years in which these voyages were performed were not without other incidents of considerable importance. In 1604, the Company were alarmed by a licence in violation of their charter, granted to Sir Edward Michelborne and others, to trade to "Cathaia, China, Japan, Corea, and Cambaya, &c." This injury was compensated in 1609, when the facility and indiscretion of James encouraged the Company to aim at a removal of those restrictions which the more cautious policy of Elizabeth had imposed. They obtained a renewal of their charter, confirming all their preceding privileges, and constituting them a body corporate, not for fifteen years, or any other limited time, but for ever; still, however, providing that, on experience of prejudice to the nation, their exclusive privileges should, after three years' notice, cease and expire.

CHAP. I.
1608.

The Charter renewed, and the Company constituted a body corporate for ever.

The earliest of the Company's voyages were exclusively directed to the islands in the Indian Ocean, as Sumatra, Java, and Amboyna, the returns being raw silk, fine calicoes, indigo, cloves, and mace. In 1608, the factors at Bantam and in the Moluccas reported that the cloths and calicoes imported from the continent of India were in great request in the islands; and recommended the opening of a trade at Surat and Cambaya, to supply them with those commodities, which might be exchanged, with extraordinary profit, for the spice and other productions of the islands. To profit by these advantages, the fleet which sailed under the orders of Sir Henry Middleton, in 1609, was directed to steer for the western coast

* Bruce's Annals, i. 152—163.

Book I. of the Asiatic continent, where they made several attempts to establish a commercial
 1612. intercourse. At Aden and Mocha they were opposed by the Turks; who surprised one of the ships, and made the Captain and seventy men prisoners. On the coast of India their endeavours were frustrated by the influence of the Portuguese. A fleet which sailed in 1611 had better success: though attacked at Swally, a place at no great distance from Surat, by a large Portuguese armament, it made a successful defence; and, notwithstanding the intrigues and efforts of the Portuguese, obtained a favourable reception at Surat. The English now succeeded in forming a commercial arrangement. They obtained permission to establish factories at Surat, Ahmedabad, Cambaya, and Goga, which were pointed out, by the agents of the Company, as the best situations. Agreeing to a duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., they stipulated, that this should be the only exaction to which their merchandise should be exposed; that protection should be afforded to their factories; and their property, even in the case of the death of their agents, secured till the arrival of the following fleet. A phirmaun or decree of the Emperor, conferring these privileges, was received on the 11th of January, 1612. This was the first establishment of the English on the continent of India; at that time the seat of one of the most extensive and splendid monarchies on the surface of the globe.*

First establishment of the English on the continent of India.

* Bruce's Annals, i. 164.

CHAP. II.

From the Change of the Company into a Joint-stock, instead of a Regulated, Company, in 1612, till the Formation of the third Joint-stock in 1631-2.

HITHERTO the voyages of the East India traders had been conducted on the terms of a regulated, rather than a joint-stock, company; each adventure being the property of a certain number of individuals, who contributed to it singly, and managed it for their own account; subject only to the general regulations of the Company. Whether or not this was more adapted to the nature of commerce and more favourable to the interests of the nation, certainly it was less favourable to the power and consequence of the Governor and Directors than the plan of trading strictly on a joint-stock, which threw into their hands the entire management and power of the whole concern. Accordingly *they* exerted themselves to decry the former method, and, in 1612, were enabled to come to a resolution that in future the trade should be carried on by a joint-stock only.*

CHAP. II.
1612.

Still it appears not to have been in their power to establish a general fund, fixed in amount, and divided into regular shares. The capital was still raised by a sort of arbitrary subscription: some individuals, whose names stood as members of the Company, advancing nothing, others largely; now, however, subscribing, not each man for a particular adventure, with an association of his own choosing, but all into the hands of the Governor and Directors; who were to employ the aggregate as one fund or capital for the benefit of those by whom it was advanced. On these terms 429,000*l.* was raised, which the Directors thought proper to divide for the purpose of four separate adventures or voyages, to be undertaken in as many successive years. The voyages were regulated, and composed as follows:

Year.	Vessels.	Investment.	
		Bullion.	Goods.
1613	8	£ 18,810	£ 12,446
1614	8	13,942	23,000
1615	6	26,660	26,065
1616	7	52,087	16,506

* Bruce, i. 165.

Book I.
1614.

The purchase, repair, and equipment of the vessels amounted to 272,544*l.* the remainder of the stock. The profit of these voyages was far from setting the management of a court of Directors, as compared with that of individuals taking charge of their own affairs, in a favourable light. The average of the profits on the eight voyages which preceded, leaving out of the account the small adventure of what is called the Company's fourth voyage, wholly unfortunate, was 171 per cent. The average of the profit on the four voyages in question, was only 87½ per cent. *

Embassy of
Sir Thomas
Roe.

As the power of the Portuguese in the East carried the usual consequences of power along with it, that is, an overbearing and insolent spirit, they had already embroiled themselves with the Mogul government. This was favourable to the English, who became joined with that government in a common cause. By the splendour, too, of their achievements against an enemy whom the governments of India were ill able to resist, they acquired a formidable reputation for prowess in war. A Portuguese fleet burned the towns of Baroach and Goga: and a powerful armament arrived at Swally with the Portuguese Viceroy, in January 1614. It attacked the English; but was defeated, with a loss of 350 men. To improve these favourable circumstances, an agent of the Company repaired to the Mogul court, where he was well received, and obtained a royal phirmaun, for a general and perpetual trade. During the same year the celebrated embassy of Sir Thomas Roe was dispatched by the king of England. The character of an ambassador, and the respect attached to it by the discernment of more enlightened nations, were but little understood at the court of the Mogul. On that occasion the choice of the English Ambassador was good: Sir Thomas Roe was a man of discernment and temper, and he made the most of his situation; though he soon discovered it was not with good policy he was sent. He obtained redress of some of the grievances of which the English merchants complained; and concluded, though with difficulty, a sort of treaty, in which liberty was promised them of trading and establishing factories in any part of the Mogul dominions; Surat, Bengal, and Sindy being particularly named.†

Beside his negotiations, Sir Thomas gives the Company good advice. His grand injunction was, to avoid territorial acquisition and military expense. "At my first arrival," says he, "I understood a fort was very necessary; but experience teaches me we are refused it to our own advantage. If the Emperor would offer me ten, I

* Bruce, i. 166.

† Bruce, i. 171, &c. Sir Thomas Roe's Journal and Letters. Churchill, i. 770—809.

would not accept of one." He then states his reasons : first, he adduces evidence that it would be of no service to their trade : " secondly, the charge," he says, " is greater than the trade can bear ; for to maintain a garrison will eat out your profit ; a war and traffic are incompatible. By my consent you shall never engage yourselves but at sea, where you are like to gain as often as to lose. The Portugueses, notwithstanding their many rich residences, are beggared by keeping of soldiers ; and yet their garrisons are but mean. They never made advantage of the Indies since they defended them : observe this well. It has also been the error of the Dutch, who seek plantations here by the sword. They turn a wonderful stock ; they prole in all places ; they possess some of the best : yet their dead pays consume all the gain. Let this be received as a rule, that if you will profit, seek it at sea, and in quiet trade ; for, without controversies, it is an error to affect garrisons and land wars in India."

" It is not a number of ports, residences, and factories, that will profit you. They will increase charge, but not recompense it. The conveniency of one, with respect to your sails, and to the commodity of investments, and the well employing of your servants, is all you need." If Sir Thomas had lived to the present day, he might have urged the trade with China as proof, by experiment, of the proposition he advanced.

" The settling your traffic here will not need so much help at court as you suppose. A little countenance and the discretion of your factors will, with easy charge, return you most profit ; but you must alter your stock. Let not your servants deceive you ; cloth, lead, teeth, quicksilver, are dead commodities, and will never drive this trade ; you must succour it by change."

" An ambassador lives not in fit honour here. A meaner agent would, among these proud Moors, better effect your business. My quality, often, for ceremonies, either begets you enemies, or suffers unworthily. Half my charge shall corrupt all this court to be your slaves. The best way to do your business in it is to find some Mogul, that you may entertain for 1000 rupees a year, as your solicitor at court. He must be authorized by the king, and then he will serve you better than ten ambassadors. Under him you must allow 500 rupees for another at your port to follow the Governor and customers, and to advertise his chief at court. These two will effect all ; for your other smaller residences are not subject to much inconveniency."

The permission to the Company's servants to trade privately on their own account, which afterwards produced so many inconveniences, was, it seems, a source of great abuse, even at this early period. " Concerning this, it is my

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1617.

opinion," says Sir Thomas, "that you absolutely prohibit it, and execute forfeitures, for your business will be the better done. All your loss is not in the goods brought home; I see here the inconveniences you think not of; I know this is harsh to all men, and seems hard. Men profess they come not for bare wages. But you will take away this plea, if you give great wages to their content; and then you know what you part from; but then you must make good choice of your servants, and use fewer." Sir Thomas tells the Company that he was very industrious to injure the Dutch. "The Dutch," he says, "are arrived at Surat from the Red Sea, with some money and southern commodities. I have done my best to disgrace them; but could not turn them out without further danger. Your comfort is, here are goods enough for both."* If so, why seek to turn them out?

One of the objects at which the English adventurers most eagerly aspired was a share in the traffic of the Spice Islands. Various circumstances contributed to inflame this desire. The spices, from their novelty, were at that time a favourite object of consumption to those, the supply of whose wants is so naturally, but thoughtlessly, regarded by the dealer as peculiarly profitable—the fashionable and the great: and the commerce, brilliant as compared with that of other nations, which the enterprise and diligence of the Dutch now carried on with the East, was almost entirely confined to these valuable commodities. The English, by their connexion with Sumatra and Java, had their full share in the article of pepper; but were excluded from cinnamon, cloves, nutmegs, and all the finer spices. Agents were now sent from Bantam to Amboyna, Banda, and other islands, who fired the jealousy and cupidity of the Dutch. The English agents, defeated in their endeavours at all the places where the Dutch had already established a footing, projected, as a last resource, a factory at Macassar, of which the produce was only rice, but which might serve as a magazine for spices collected from the neighbouring islands.†

In the year 1617, or the year of the last of the four voyages in which the

* Churchill, i. 106—108. He gives another account of his endeavours to injure the Dutch, in the following words:—"The 10th, 11th, and 12th, I spent in giving the king and prince advice that a Dutch ship lay before Surat, and would not declare upon what design it came, till a fleet arrived; which was expected with the first fit season. This I improved to fill their heads with jealousies of the designs of the Dutch, and the dangers that might ensue from them; which was well taken: and, being demanded, I gave my advice to prevent coming to a rupture with them, and yet exclude them the trade of India." *Ib.* 774.

† Bruce, i. 174, 178.

general subscription had been employed, the Company's agents abroad reported ; CHAP. II.
 That Surat was the place at which the cloths of India could best be obtained, 1618.
 though nothing could there be disposed of in return except China goods, spices, Report by the
 and money : That large quantities of Indian wove goods might be sold, and Company's
 gold, camphor, and benjamin obtained, at the two factories of Acheen and Tekoo agents, on the
 on the island of Sumatra : That Bantam afforded a still larger demand for the state of the
 wove goods of India, and supplied pepper for the European market : That Jaca- trade abroad.
 tra, Jambee, and Polania, agreed with the two former places in the articles
 both of demand and supply, though both on a smaller scale : That Siam might
 afford a large market for similar commodities, and would yield gold, silver, and
 deer skins for the Japan market : That English cloth, lead, deer skins, silks, and
 other goods might be disposed of at Japan for silver, copper, and iron, though
 hitherto want of skill had rendered the adventures to that kingdom unprofitable :
 That, on the island of Borneo, diamonds, bezoar stones, and gold, might be ob-
 tained at Succadania, notwithstanding the mischief occasioned by the ignorance
 of the first factors ; but from Banjarmassin, where the same articles were found,
 it would be expedient, on account of the treacherous character of the natives, to
 withdraw the factory : That the best rice in India could be bought, and the wove
 goods of India sold at Macassar : And that at Banda the same goods could be
 sold, and nutmegs and mace procured, even to a large amount, if the obstruc-
 tions of European rivals were removed.*

Surat and Bantam were the seats of the Company's principal establishments.

In the year 1617-18, a subscription was opened for a new fund, and was car- Second joint-
 ried to the large amount of 1,600,000*l*. This was denominated the Company's stock.
 Second Joint-stock. They were now, we are told, possessed of thirty-six ships,
 from 100 to 1,000 tons burthen ; and the proprietors of stock amounted to 954.†
 But as the accounts of the Company have never been remarkable for clearness,
 or their historians for precision, we are not informed whether these ships be-
 longed to the owners of the first joint-stock, or to the owners of the second ;
 or if to both, in what proportion ; whether the 954 proprietors of stock were
 the subscribers to both funds, or to the last only ; whether any part of the first
 joint-stock had been paid back to the owners, as the proceeds came in ; or whe-
 ther both funds were now in the hands of the Directors at once, employed for

* Bruce, i. 188.

† Sir Jeremy Sambrooke's Report on East India Trade (MS. in East India Register Office)
 quoted by Bruce, i. 193.

BOOK I.

1618.

the respective benefit of the respective lists of subscribers: two trading capitals in the same hands, employed separately for the separate account of different associations. That such was the case to a certain extent may be drawn from this, that of the last of the voyages upon the first of the funds the returns were not yet made. We shall see that, afterwards, the Directors had, at one and the same time, in their hands, the funds of several bodies of subscribers, and were bound to employ them separately, for the separate benefit of each; that they, as well as their agents abroad, experienced great inconvenience in preserving their accounts and concerns separate and distinct; and that the interests and pretensions of the several bodies were prone to interfere.

The new subscription was divided into portions for three separate voyages.

The passion, as natural, of the Company's agents, at the different stations abroad, was to grasp at every thing, with little regard to the narrowness of the funds upon which their operations depended. In one point of view this was advantageous. While the ground was yet imperfectly explored it yielded a wider field for selection. The factors at Surat were captivated with the project of a trade to Persia. It promised a vent for English woollens to a large amount, and would furnish silks and other goods, which, both in Europe and in India, would sell to the greatest advantage. Sir Thomas Roe dissuaded the speculation, on the ground, that the Portuguese were already in possession of the commerce; and that it would cost the Company more to protect themselves in it, than they could even hope to gain by it. The views of the factors, because the most flattering, were the most persuasive: Agents were sent to the court of Persia; grants of privileges were obtained; and a trade was opened, which experience proved to be of little importance.

Rivalship
between the
English and
other Euro-
peans in
India.

The rivalry which the East India Company experienced from the other nations of Europe includes, for a considerable time, the principal portion of their history. The Portuguese had long, on the pretence of discovery, maintained a claim to the exclusive enjoyment of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope. They had, partly by conquest, partly by agreement, made themselves masters of Goa, Bombay, and other places on the Malabar coast; of Aden at the entrance of the Red Sea; of Ormus in the Persian Gulf; of part of the Malay coast in the Straits of Malacca; of the Molucca islands; and of the coasts of Ceylon, the most valuable of all the eastern islands: they had factories in Bengal, factories in Siam; and they had erected the city of Macao on the coast of China.

While the Dutch continued subject to the crown of Spain, they had been ac-

customed to repair to Lisbon for the productions of the East ; which, even at that early period, they were employed in distributing to the rest of Europe. When they resolved to shake off the yoke of their ancient masters, one of the means which Philip employed to distress them was, to deprive them of the commerce of his dominions. The Dutch, prevented from obtaining Indian commodities by traffic with the subjects of Philip, resolved to become competitors for the trade with India itself.

At the time when the Dutch commenced their voyages to the East, the crown of Spain was engaged in enterprises of so much importance in other quarters of the globe, and so much engrossed with the contemplation of its splendid empire in the New World, that the acquisitions of the Portuguese, now its subjects, in the East Indies, were treated with comparative neglect. The Dutch, accordingly, who entered upon the trade to India with considerable resources and the utmost ardour, were enabled to supplant the Portuguese in the spice trade, and, after a struggle, to expel them from the Molucca islands. That celebrated people, now freed from the oppression of a bad government, were advancing in the career of prosperity with prodigious strides. The augmentation of capital was rapid, in Holland, beyond what has often been witnessed in any other part of the globe. A proportional share of this capital naturally found its way into the channel of the India trade, and gave both extent and vigour to the enterprises of the nation in the East. The English, whose country, poor, oppressed by misgovernment, or scourged with civil war, afforded little capital to extend their trade, or means to afford it protection, found themselves unequal competitors with a people so favourably situated as the Dutch.

During that age, when the principles of public wealth were very imperfectly understood, hardly any trade was regarded as profitable, but that which was exclusive. The different nations which traded to India all traded by way of monopoly ; and the several companies treated every proposal for a participation in their traffic as a proposal for their ruin. In the same spirit, every nation which obtained admittance into any newly explored channel of commerce endeavoured to exclude from it all participators, and considered its own profits in that particular track as depending on the absence of all competition.

The Dutch, who were governed by the same prejudices as their contemporaries, and who were actuated, at least in that age, to rather more perhaps than the usual intensity, with the appetite for gain, beheld, with great impatience, the attempts of the English to share with them in the spice trade. While contending for their independence against the power of Spain, and looking to England

Book I. for support, they were constrained to practise moderation and forbearance. During this time the English were enabled to form a connexion with Sumatra, to establish themselves at Bantam, and to obtain a share in the traffic of pepper. This being a commodity so generally produced in the East, it could not easily become the subject of monopoly: and before the English made efforts on any considerable scale to interfere with the trade of the further India, where the finer spices were produced, the power and confidence of the Dutch had greatly increased.

The Dutch more formidable opponents than the Portuguese.

The Dutch were more formidable rivals, and hurtful opponents, than the Portuguese. The interference was less direct between the English and the Portuguese. The principal settlements of the Portuguese on the continent of India were on the Malabar coast, and at a great distance from Surat, which was the principal seat of the English traffic. It was only in the Persian trade where much incompatibility of interests existed: and feeble as the English at that time really were in India, it is remarkable that they were an overmatch at sea for the Portuguese; and hardly ever encountered them without a brilliant victory, or at least decided advantages. The case was different in regard to the Dutch. The pretensions of the English to the spice trade interfered with the very vitals of the Dutch commerce in the East; and the fleets which the prosperous enterprise of the new republic enabled it to maintain were so far superior to those which the restricted means of the English Company allowed them to send, that contention became altogether hopeless and vain.

It was not till the year 1617-18, that the hostility of the two nations displayed itself in operations of force. In those places where the Dutch had formed any establishments, they had in general been able, by intrigue and artifice, to defeat the attempts of the English to introduce themselves. The English took possession of two small islands, called Polaroon and Rosengin, which were not formally occupied by the Dutch, but intimately connected with some other possessions. They raised pretensions to them, and attacked the English. The English, however, had already so well fortified themselves, that the Dutch found it impracticable at the first attempt to expel them; but they found the means, partly by force and partly by artifice, to get possession of two English ships, on their voyage to these islands, carried them to a Dutch settlement, and refused to deliver them up, unless all pretensions to the Spice Islands were renounced.*

* Bruce, i. 199.

The proceedings of the Dutch, though regarded by the English as in the highest degree rapacious and unjust, were founded on pretensions, not inferior to those on which the English Company endeavoured to establish rights and to realize claims. They were pretensions which the Dutch at least regarded as valid and equitable; since they presented them to the English monarch himself, as the ground of complaint against his subjects, and of a demand for his interference to prevent the recurrence of similar injuries. In 1618, the Dutch Company presented a memorial to King James, in which they set forth, that, at their own cost and hazard, they had expelled the Portuguese from the Spice Islands, and had established a treaty with the natives, on the express condition that they should afford the natives protection against the Portuguese, and on the other hand enjoy the exclusive advantage of their trade; that the agents, however, of the English Company had interfered with those well-established rights; and had not only endeavoured to trade with the natives, but to incite them against the Dutch; who possessed rights with regard to Bantam similar, and similarly infringed.

CHAP. II.
1618.

To these complaints the English Company replied by an enumeration of the injuries which, from the resistance, the intrigues, and violence of the Dutch, they had sustained in their attempts to introduce their trade even in those places where no factories of the Dutch had ever existed: Among those grievances, however, they enumerated the hostilities experienced at Tydore and Amboyna, places to which the pretensions of the Dutch applied in all their force.* According to the ideas, which then prevailed, that priority of occupancy constituted sovereignty in newly-discovered countries, and that the will of the natives was to be counted for nothing, ideas on which the English grounded their proceedings as confidently as any other nation, the truth is, that the English had not a shadow of right to the trade of the Moluccas: for though Polaroon and Rosengin might not, by actual occupancy, have accrued to the Dutch, they form part of a narrow and closely connected cluster of islands, of which the Dutch had seized the principal, and with the security of which the presence of an enemy in any of the rest could not be reconciled. If the French should take possession of any of the Hebrides under pretence that no British magistrate was ever established on it, or even that it was uninhabited, would it less be regarded as usurpation and injustice? With respect to Java, and the settle-

* Memorial of the Dutch East India Company to King James, and Reply of the London East India Company thereto, in the year 1616, (East India Papers in the State Paper Office) quoted, Bruce, i. 202.

Book I.

1619.

ments at Bantam and Jacatra, the English had an equitable plea, of which they appear not to have availed themselves. They might have insisted on the consent of the Dutch, who had not resisted their early settlement on that island, now sanctioned by time.

Compromise
with the
Dutch.

After a tedious interchange of hostile efforts, in which intrigue and force were combined; the practice of buying up the pepper, at prices higher than the English could afford, forming one of the principal subjects of English complaint; it was agreed between the two governments in Europe, at that time allies, to institute a mutual inquiry, and form an arrangement respecting the claims of their subjects in the East. Commissioners were appointed on the part of each; and, after repeated conferences, a treaty was concluded at London, on the 17th July, 1619. In this it was stipulated, that a mutual amnesty should take place, and a mutual restitution of ships and property; that the pepper trade at Java should be equally divided; that the English should have a free trade at Pullicate, on the Coromandel coast, on paying half the expenses of the garrison; and that of the trade of the Moluccas and Bandas, they should enjoy one third, the Dutch two, paying the charges of the garrisons in the same proportion. Besides these conditions, which regarded their opposite pretensions, the treaty included arrangements for mutual profit and defence. Each Company was to furnish ten ships of war, which were not to be sent in the European voyages, but employed in India for mutual protection; and the two nations were to unite their efforts to reduce the duties and exactions of the native governments at the different ports. To superintend the execution of this treaty a council was appointed, to be composed of four members of each Company, called the *Council of Defence*. And the treaty was to be in force during twenty years.*

This solemn engagement is a proof, if there was not another, of the imperfection which still adhered to the art of legislation. The principal stipulations were so vague, and the execution of them depended on so many unascertained circumstances, that the grounds of dispute and contention were multiplied rather than reduced. For these evils, as far as they were foreseen, the Council of Defence seems to have been devised as the remedy. But experience here taught, what experience has uniformly taught, that in all vague arrangements the advantages are reaped by the strongest party. The voice of four Englishmen in the Council of Defence was but a feeble protection against the superior capital and fleets of the Dutch. To secure the pretensions of the English they

* Rymer's *Fœdera*, xvii. 170. Bruce, i. 212.

should have maintained a naval and military force superior to that of their opponents; and in that case they would have been the oppressors; the Dutch would have been expelled from the spice trade; the spice trade would have remained in the hands of the English, who would have overlooked the continent of India, because their capital would not have sufficed to embrace it; the continent would have been left to the enterprise of other nations; and that brilliant empire which the English have established would not, it is probable, have begun to exist.

In consequence of this treaty, by which the English were bound to send a fleet of ten ships to India, a larger fund was this year raised than had been provided for any preceding voyage: 62,490*l.* in the precious metals, and 28,508*l.* in goods, were exported with the fleet. The return was brought back in a single ship, and sold at 108,887*l.* *

In the interval which passed, from the time of concluding the treaty till the establishment of the *Council of Defence* at Jacatra, the Dutch had committed various acts of oppression to the English; and when the council began its operations, the Dutch, after executing some of the least important conditions of the treaty, endeavoured to evade the rest. They consented to restore the ships taken from the English, but refused to restore the goods or stores taken by individuals: The pretext was, that the Company could not be responsible for any acts but their own; though, if credit may be given to the letters of the English factors at Jacatra, they exploded the same pretension when advanced on the opposite side: They refused to admit the English to their share of the pepper trade, till they should indemnify them for the expenses incurred at the siege of Bantam, and by the fortifications which they had raised: They insisted that at Jacatra, and all other places where they had erected fortifications, they possessed the rights of sovereignty; and that in those places the English could claim permission to reside only under the Dutch laws: They set forth the large expense which they had incurred in fortifying the Spice Islands, and estimated the charges of their maintenance at 60,000*l.* per annum; of all which they required the English to advance their due proportion before they could be admitted to the stipulated share of the trade. On these latter demands, the English objected, that some of the fortifications were at places where no produce was obtained, and that none of them were useful but for defence against the Spaniards and Portuguese, with whom the English were not at war. If there were fortifica-

The Dutch
evade the
treaty.

* Bruce, i. 213.

Book I.
1622.

tions at places where none were required, the English had a right to decline paying for the blunders of the Dutch; but as they claimed a share of the trade upon the foundation of the Dutch conquests, and would not have been admitted to it without a war had not those conquests taken place, it was not a very good plea against paying for the fortifications that they were not at war with the Spaniards and Portuguese. In framing the treaty, no distinction was made between past expenses and future: the English intended to bind themselves only for a share of the future: the Dutch availed themselves of the ambiguity to demand a share of the past. On these pretensions they acted with so high a hand, that the English commissioners of the Council of Defence reported the impracticability of continuing the English trade, unless measures were taken in Europe to check the overbearing and oppressive proceedings of the Dutch.*

Advantages
gained over
the Portu-
guese.

In the circle of which Surat was the centre, the English, as they were a better match for their antagonists, had a better prospect of success. In 1620, two of the Company's ships, which sailed from Surat to Persia, found the port of Jasques blockaded by a Portuguese fleet, consisting of five larger and sixteen smaller vessels: unable to cope with so disproportionate a force, they sailed back to Surat: being joined by two ships they returned, attacked the Portuguese, and, after an indecisive action, entered the port. The Portuguese retired to Ormus, but, after refitting, came back for revenge. An obstinate conflict ensued, in which the English were victorious over a vast superiority of force. Such an event was calculated to produce a great impression on the minds of the Persians.

It was stipulated between the English and Persians, to attack with joint forces the Portuguese on the island of Ormus, which that nation in the days of its prosperity had seized and fortified. The English furnished the naval, the Persians the military force. The city and castle were taken on the 22d of April, 1622. For this service the English received part of the plunder of Ormus, and a grant of half the customs at the port of Gombroon; which became their principal station in the Persian gulf. The agents of the Company at Bantam, who were already vested with the superb title of President and Council, and with a sort of control over the other factories, condemned this enterprise; as depriving them of the ships and effects, so much required to balance the power, and restrain the injustice, of the Dutch.*

Voyages from
1621 to 1624.

The domestic proceedings of the Company at this period were sufficiently

* Bruce, i. 223.

† Bruce, i. 237, 238.

humble. In 1621-22 they were able to fit out only four ships, supplied with 12,900*l.* in gold and silver, and 6,253*l.* in goods; the following year, they sent five ships, 61,600*l.* in money, and 6,430*l.* in goods; in 1623-24, they equipped seven vessels, and furnished them with 68,720*l.* in money, and 17,340*l.* in goods. This last was a prosperous year to the domestic exchequer. Five ships arrived from India with cargoes, not of pepper only, but of all the finer spices, which, notwithstanding the increasing complaints against the Dutch, the Company's agents had been enabled to procure. The sale of this part alone of the cargoes amounted to 485,593*l.*; that of the Persian raw silk to 97,000*l.*; while 80,000*l.* in pursuance of the treaty of 1619, was received as compensation money from the Dutch.*

CHAP. II.
1624.

Other feelings than those which sprang from these receipts were occasioned by a demand of the King, and another of the Duke of Buckingham, the Lord High Admiral, for shares, to the one as droits of the crown, to the other as droits of the admiralty, of the prize money gained by the various captures of the Company, particularly that of Ormus. The Company, who deemed it prudent to make little opposition to the claims of the King, objected to those of the Duke of Buckingham, as not having acted under letters of marque from the Admiral, but under their charter. The question was referred to the Judge of the Admiralty court; witnesses were examined to ascertain the amount of the prize money, which was estimated at 100,000*l.* and 240,000 reals of eight. The Company urged the expense of their equipments, the losses they had sustained, and the detriment to their mercantile concerns by withdrawing their ships from commerce to the operations of war. All possible modes of solicitation to the King and the Admiral were employed; but the desire for their money was stronger than their interest. Buckingham, who knew they must lose their voyage, if the season for sailing was lost, made the ships be detained; and the Company, to escape this calamity, were glad of an accommodation. The Duke agreed to accept of 10,000*l.*, which he received. A like sum was demanded for the King, but there is no direct evidence that it ever was paid.†

Demands upon the Company by the King and the Duke of Buckingham.

The animosities between the English and Dutch in the islands, were now approaching to a crisis. The English complained of oppression, and found themselves so weak, as to be at the mercy of their rivals. They stated that, in the execution of the joint articles of the treaty, the English were charged with every

Trial and execution of the English at Amboyna.

* Accounts in the Indian Register Office. Bruce, i. 225, 234, 241.

† East India Papers in the State Paper Office. Bruce, i. 241.

BOOK I.

1624.

item of expense, though their voice was entirely disregarded in the disposal of the money, in the employment of the naval and military force, and even in the management of the trade; that, instead of being admitted to their stipulated share of the spice commerce, they were almost entirely extruded from it; and that, under the pretext of a conspiracy, the Dutch had executed great numbers of the natives at Banda, and reduced Polaroon to a desert.* At last arrived that event which made so deep an impression on the minds of Englishmen. In February, 1623, Captain Towerson and nine Englishmen, nine Japanese, and one Portuguese sailor, were seized at Amboyna, under the accusation of a conspiracy to surprise the garrison, and to expel the Dutch; and, being tried, were pronounced guilty, and executed. The accusation was treated by the English as nothing but a pretext to cover a plan for their extermination. But the facts of an event, which roused so high and permanent indignation in England, have never been exactly ascertained. The nation, whose passions were kindled, was more disposed to paint a scene to itself in the deepest colours of atrocity, and to believe whatever could inflame its resentment, than to enter upon a rigid investigation of facts. If it be improbable, however, on the one hand, that the English, whose numbers were small, and by whom ultimately so little advantage could be gained, were really guilty of any such design as the Dutch imputed to them; it is on the other hand equally improbable that the Dutch, without believing them to be guilty, would have proceeded against them by the evidence of a judicial trial. Had simple extermination been their object, a more quiet and safe expedient presented itself: they had it in their power at any time to make the English disappear, and to lay the blame upon the natives. The probability is, that, from certain circumstances which roused their suspicion and jealousy, the Dutch really believed in the conspiracy, and were hurried on, by their resentments and interests, to bring the helpless objects of their fury to a trial; that the judges before whom the trial was conducted were in too heated a state of mind to see the innocence, or believe in any thing but the guilt, of the accused; and that in this manner, as many both before and after them, the sufferers perished. Enough, assuredly, of what is hateful may be found in this transaction, without supposing the spirit of demons in beings of the same nature with ourselves, men reared in a similar state of

* The Dutch, in their vindication, stated that the English intrigued with the Portuguese, and underhand assisted the natives in receiving the Portuguese into the islands. See Anderson's *History of Commerce*, in Macpherson's *Annals*, ii. 305.

society, under a similar system of education, and a similar religion. To bring men rashly to a trial whom a violent opposition of interests has led us to detest, rashly to believe them criminal, to decide against them with minds too much blinded by passion to discern the truth, and put them to death, without remorse are acts of which our own nation, or any other, would have been then, and would still be, too ready to be guilty. Happy would it be, how trite soever the reflection, if nations, from the scenes which excite their indignation against others, would learn temper and forbearance in cases where they become the actors themselves !

One of the circumstances, the thought of which most strongly incited the passions of the English, was the application of the torture. This, however, according to the Civil Law, was an established and regular part of judicial inquiry. In all the kingdoms of continental Europe, and Holland among the rest, the torture was a common method of extorting evidence from supposed criminals, and would have been applied by the Dutch judges to their own countrymen. As both the Japanese, who were accused of being accessaries to the imputed crime, and the Englishmen themselves, made confession of guilt under the torture, this, however absurd and inhuman the law, constituted legal evidence in the code of the Dutch, as well as in the codes of all the other continental nations of Europe. By this, added to other articles of evidence which would have been insufficient without it, proof was held to be completed ; and death, in all capital cases, authorized and required. This was ancient and established law ; and as there are scarcely any courses of oppression to which Englishmen cannot submit, and which they will not justify and applaud, provided only it has ancient and established law for its support, they ought, of all nations, to have been the most ready to find an excuse and apology for the Dutch.* From the first moment of

* The English had not been so long strangers to the torture themselves, that it needed to excite in their breasts any emotions of astonishment. "The rack itself," says Hume in his History of Elizabeth, v. 457, "though not admitted in the ordinary execution of justice, was frequently used upon any suspicion, by authority of a warrant from a secretary or the Privy Council. Even the Council in the Marches of Wales were empowered, by their very commission, to make use of torture whenever they thought proper. There cannot be a stronger proof how lightly the rack was employed, than the following story, told by Lord Bacon. We shall give it in his own words : 'The Queen was mightily incensed against Haywarde, on account of a book he dedicated to Lord Essex, thinking it a seditious prelude to put into the people's head boldness and faction : [to our apprehension, says Hume, Haywarde's book seems rather to have a contrary tendency ; but Queen Elizabeth was very difficult to please on that head.] She said, she had an opinion that there was treason in it, and asked me if I could not find any places in it, that might be drawn within

BOOK I.

1624.

acting upon the treaty, the Dutch had laid it down, as a principle, that, at all the places where they had erected fortifications the English should be subject to the Dutch laws; and though the English had remonstrated, they had yet complied.

It was in vain that the English President and Council at Java, on hearing of the massacre as they called it, remonstrated in the most indignant terms; and even intimated their design of withdrawing from the island. In their representations to the Court of Directors at home, they declared, what might have been seen from the beginning, that it was impossible to trade on a combination of interests with the Dutch; and that, as negotiation had been found unavailing, nothing but a force in the islands, equal to that of their rivals, could ensure to their countrymen a share of the trade.

Rage in England at the Dutch.

When the news of the execution at Amboyna arrived in England, the people, whose minds had been already inflamed against the Dutch, by continual reports of injustice to their countrymen, were thrown into the most violent combustion. The Court of Directors exerted themselves to feed the popular fury. They had a most hideous picture prepared, in which their countrymen were represented, with all the most shocking expressions of horror and agony in their countenance and attitudes, and all the most frightful instruments of torture applied to their bodies, expiring upon the rack. The press teemed with publica-

the case of treason?..... Another time when the Queen could not be persuaded that it was his writing whose name was to it, but that it had some more mischievous author, she said, with great indignation, that she would have him racked to produce his author.'..... Thus, continues Hume, "had it not been for Bacon's humanity, or rather his wit, this author, a man of letters, had been put to the rack for a most innocent performance."—The truth is, that the Company themselves, at this very time, were in the regular habit of perpetrating tortures upon their own countrymen, and even their own servants—of torturing to death by whips or famine. Captain Hamilton (New Account of the East Indies, i. 362,) informs us, that before they were intrusted with the powers of martial law, having no power to punish capitally any but pirates, they made it a rule to whip to death, or starve to death, those of whom they wished to get rid. He produces (Ib. 376,) an instance of a deserter at Fort St. George, "whipt," as he expresses it, "out of this world into the next." The power too, of executing as for piracy, the same author complains, was made use of to murder many private traders. "That power (he says, Ib. 362,) of executing pirates is so strangely stretched, that if any private trader is injured by the tricks of a Governor, and can find no redress—if the injured person is so bold as to talk of *lex talionis*, he is infallibly declared a pirate." He gives an account of an attempt of an agent of the Company, and a creature of the Governor of Fort St. George, to swear away his life by perjury at Siam. (Ib. ii. 183.)—These parallels are presented, not for the sake of clearing the one party at the expense of the other; but, by showing things as they were, to give the world at last possession of the real state of the case.

tions which painted in the blackest colours the horrid scene at Amboyna. And to such a degree of rage were the populace excited, that the Dutch merchants in London became justly alarmed, and applied to the Privy Council for protection. They complained of the inflammatory publications; and particularly of the picture, which, being exposed to the people, had contributed to work them up to the most desperate resolutions. The Council called the Directors before them to answer these complaints. Denying that they had any concern with the publications, they acknowledged that the picture was produced by their order, and was intended by them to be preserved in their house as a perpetual memorial of the cruelty and treachery of the Dutch. The Directors were aware that the popular tide had reached the table of the council room, and that they had nothing to apprehend from confessing how far they had been instrumental in raising the waters.*

CHAP. II.
1624.

Application was made to the King, to obtain signal reparation from the Dutch government, for so great a national insult and calamity. The whole nation was too violently agitated to leave any suspicion that the application could be neglected. A commission of inquiry was formed of the King's principal servants, who reported in terms confirming the general belief and indignation; and recommended an order, which was immediately issued, for intercepting and detaining the Dutch East India fleets, till satisfaction was obtained. With great gravity the Dutch government returned for answer; that they would send orders to their Governor General in the Indies to permit the English to retire from the Dutch settlements without paying any duties; that all disputes should be referred to the Council of Defence; that the English might build forts for the protection of their trade, provided they were at the distance of thirty miles from any fort of the Dutch; that the "administration, however, of politic government, and particular jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, at all such places as owe acknowledgment to the Dutch," should remain wholly in their hands; and that to the Dutch belonged the exclusive right to the Moluccas, Bandas, and Amboyna.†

Conduct of the
Dutch govern-
ment.

This was an undisguised assumption of all the rights for which their subjects were contending in India. It is remarkable enough that the English East India Company, who were highly dissatisfied with the other parts of this answer, declared their acceptance of the first article, which permitted their servants to

* East India Papers in the State Paper Office. Bruce, i. 256.

† Bruce, i. 258.

Book I.

1627.

The Company
entrusted with
the exercise of
martial law.

retire from the Dutch settlements. And here, for the present, the matter rested.

In 1624, the Company applied, by petition to the King, for authority to punish their servants abroad, by martial, as well as municipal law. It appears not that any difficulty was experienced in obtaining their request; or that any parliamentary proceeding, for transferring unlimited powers over the lives and fortunes of the citizens, was deemed even a necessary ceremony. This ought to be regarded as an era in the history of the Company.*

Company's
trade.

In the year 1624-5, the Company's voyage to India consisted of five ships; but of the amount of the capital with which they were supplied, no account, it should seem, remains. In 1625-26, it consisted of six ships; other circumstances equally unknown. In 1626-27, it amounted to seven ships; farther information wanting as before.† In this year we gain the knowledge, collaterally, of one of those important facts, in the Company's history, which it has been their sedulous care to preserve concealed, except when some interest, as now, was to be served by the disclosure. Sir Robert Shirley, who had been ambassador at the court of Persia, made application to the King and Council to order the East India Company to pay him 2,000*l.* as a compensation for his exertions and services in procuring them a trade with Persia. The Company, beside denying the pretended services, urged their inability to pay; stating that they had been obliged to contract so large a debt as 200,000*l.*; and that their stock had fallen to 20 per cent. discount, shares of 100*l.* selling for no more than 80*l.*‡

The Company's Persian trade was not prosperous, under the caprice and extortions of the Persian magistrates. At Java their agents, tired out with the mortifications and disasters to which they were exposed from the Dutch, retired to the island of Lagundy, in the Straits of Sunda; having abandoned both Bantam and Jacatra, at which the Dutch had now established their principal seat of government, and called it Batavia. This conduct was rash and imprudent; for the island was found to be so unhealthy that, in less than a year, they wished to return. So great was their distress that, of 250 individuals, 120 were sick; and they had not a sufficient crew to dispatch a single ship to any of the English factories. In these circumstances the Dutch lent them assistance, and brought them back to Batavia.§ On the coast of Coromandel some feeble

* Bruce, i. 252.

† Ib. 252, 265, 271.

‡ East India Papers in the State Paper Office. Bruce, i. 272.

§ Bruce, i. 262, 264, 268.

efforts were continued. The Company had established factories at Masulipatam and Pullicat; but the rivalry of the Dutch pursued them, and obliged them to relinquish Pullicat. In 1624-5, they projected an establishment in the kingdom of Tanjore, but were opposed by a new rival, the Danes. At Armegum, however, at some distance south from Nellore, they purchased, in the succeeding year, a piece of ground from the chief of the district; erected and fortified a factory; and, suffering at Masulipatam oppression from the native government, they withdrew the factory in 1628, and transferred it to Armegum.*

CHAP. II.
1628.

Shortly after the first application to James on account of the injury at Amboyna, that monarch died. In 1627-8, the application was renewed to Charles; and three large Dutch Indiamen from Surat, which put into Portsmouth, were detained. The Company, watching the decline of the King's authority, and the growing power of the House of Commons, were not satisfied with an application to the throne, but in the following year presented, for the first time, a memorial to the Commons. They represented that, by their failure in the spice trade, and the difficulties they experienced in opening a trade for wove goods on the coast of Coromandel, they were nearly driven from all their factories. They assigned as causes, partly the opposition of the native powers, but chiefly the hostility of the Dutch. The narrowness of their own funds, and their unskilful management by the negligent Directors of a joint-stock, far more powerful causes, they overlooked or suppressed. They set forth, however, the merits of the Company, as towards the nation, in terms exactly resembling those which continue to be repeated to the present day: they employed many seamen: they exported much goods! As if the capital they employed would have remained idle; as if it would not have maintained seamen, and exported goods, if such were its most profitable employment, had the East India Company, or East India traffic, never existed.†

Reparation
sought for the
injury at
Amboyna.

The detention of the ships, and the zeal with which the subject seemed now to be taken up in England, produced explanation and remonstrance on the part of the Dutch: That they had appointed judges to take cognizance of the proceedings at Amboyna, even before the parties had returned from Europe: That delay had arisen from the situation of the judges on whom other services devolved, and from the time necessary to translate documents in a foreign tongue: That the detention of the ships, the property of private individuals altogether

* Bruce, i. 264, 269, 290.

† Ib. i. 276, 277, 282. Anderson in Macpherson's Annals, ii. 351.

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1628.

unconcerned with the transaction, might bring unmerited ruin on them, but could not accelerate the proceedings of the judges; on the other hand, by creating national indignation, it would only tend to unfit them for a sober and impartial inquiry: That were the dispute unfortunately to issue in a war, however the English in Europe might detain the fleets of the Dutch, the English Company must suffer in India far greater evils than those of which they were now seeking for redress. At last, on a proposal that the States should send to England commissioners of inquiry, and a promise that justice should be speedily rendered, the ships were released. It was afterwards recommended by the ministry, that the East India Company should send over witnesses to Holland to afford evidence before the Dutch tribunal; but to this the Company objected, and satisfaction was still deferred.*

Company's
trade.

In 1627-28, the Company provided only two ships and a pinnace for the outward voyage. They deemed it necessary to assign reasons for this diminution; dreading the inferences which might thence be drawn. They had many ships in India which, from the obstructions of the Dutch, and the state of their funds, had been unable to return: The stock would be large, though the number of ships was small; 60,000*l.* or 70,000*l.* in money and goods: And they hoped to bring home, richly laden, all their ships the following year. In 1628-29, five ships were sent out; two for the trade with India, and three for that with Persia; and though no account is preserved of the stock with which they were supplied, a petition to the King remains for leave to export 60,000*l.* in gold and silver in the ships destined to Persia. In the succeeding year four ships were sent to Persia, and none to India. Of the stock which they carried with them, no account is preserved.†

As the sums in gold and silver, which the Company had for several years found it necessary to export, exceeded the limits to which they were confined by the terms of their charter, they had proceeded annually upon a petition to the King, and a special permission. It was now, however, deemed advisable to apply for a general license, so large as would comprehend the greatest amount which any occasion they contemplated would render it necessary to send. The sum for which they solicited this permission was 80,000*l.* in silver, and 40,000*l.* in gold; and they recommended, as the best mode of authenticating the privilege, that it should be incorporated in a fresh renewal of their charter; which was accordingly bestowed.‡

* Bruce, i. 285, 287.

† Ib. i. 278, 293.

‡ Ib. 293.

HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA.

Notwithstanding the terms on which the English stood with the Dutch, they were allowed to re-establish their factory at Bantam after the failure of the attempt at Lagundy: a war in which the Dutch were involved with some of the native princes of the island lessened, perhaps, their disposition or their power to oppose their European rivals. As Bantam was now a station of inferior importance to Surat, the government of Bantam was reduced to an agency, dependent upon the Presidency of Surat, which became the chief seat of the Company's government in India. Among the complaints against the Dutch, it was one of the heaviest, that they sold European goods cheaper, and bought Indian goods dearer, at Surat, than the English; who were thus extruded from the market. To sell cheaper and buy dearer is competition, the soul of trade. If the Dutch sold so cheap and bought so dear, as to be losers, all that was wanting on the part of the English was a little patience. The fact, however, was, that the Dutch, trading on a larger capital and with more economy, were perfectly able to outbid the English both in purchase and sale. The English at Surat had to sustain at this time not only the commercial rivalry of the Dutch but also a powerful effort of the Portuguese to regain their influence in that part of the East. The Viceroy at Goa had in April, 1630, received a reinforcement from Europe of nine ships and 2,000 soldiers, and projected the recovery of Ormus. Some negotiation to obtain the exclusive trade of Surat was tried in vain with the Mogul Governor; and in September an English fleet of five ships endeavoured to enter the port of Swally. A sharp, though not a decisive, action was fought. The English had the advantage; and, after sustaining several subsequent skirmishes, and one great effort to destroy their fleet by fire, succeeded in landing their cargoes.*

* Bruce, i. 296, 301, 300, 302.

CHAP. III.

From the Formation of the third Joint-stock, in 1632, till the Coalition of the Company with the Merchant Adventurers in 1657.

Book I.
1635.
Third joint-stock.

IN 1631-32, a subscription was opened for a third joint-stock. This amounted to 420,700l.* Still we are left in darkness with regard to some important circumstances. We know not in what degree the capital which had been placed in the hands of the Directors by former subscriptions had been repaid; not even so much as whether any part of it had been repaid, though the Directors were now without money to carry on the trade.

With the funds which the new subscription supplied, seven ships were fitted out in the same season; but of the money or goods embarked in this voyage no account remains. In the following year, 1633-34, the fleet consisted of five ships, the amount of the capital or cargoes in like manner unknown. In 1634-35, it amounted to no more than three ships, the money or goods unstated as before.†

During this period, however, some progress was made in extending the connexions of the Company with the eastern coast of Hindustan. It was thought advisable to replace the factory at Masulipatam not long after it had been removed; and certain privileges, which afforded protection from former grievances, were obtained from the King of Golconda, the sovereign of the place. Permission was given by the Mogul Emperor to trade to Piple in Orissa; and a factor was sent to it from Masulipatam. For the more commodious government of these stations, Bantam was again raised to the rank of a Presidency, and the eastern coast was placed under its jurisdiction. Under the hopeless prospect of contending with the Dutch for the trade of the islands, the Company had, for some time, dispatched their principal fleets to Surat; and the trade with this part of India and with Persia now chiefly engaged their attention. From servants at a vast distance, and the servants of a great and negligent master, the best service could not be easily procured. For this discovery the Directors were

* Papers in the Indian Register Office. Sir Jeremy Sambrooke's Report on the East India Trade. Bruce, i. 306.

† Bruce, i. 306, 320, 323.

indebted, not to any sagacity of their own, but to a misunderstanding among the agents themselves: Who, betraying one another, acknowledged that they had neglected the affairs of their employers to attend to their own; and, while they pursued with avidity a private trade for their private benefit, had abandoned that of the Company to every kind of disorder.*

CHAP. III.
1635.

As pepper was a product of the Malabar coast, a share in the trade of that commodity was now aimed at, through a channel, which the Dutch would not be able to obstruct: There was concluded, between the English and Portuguese, in 1634-35, and confirmed with additional articles the following year, a treaty, according to which it was ordained that the English should have free access to the ports of the Portuguese, and the Portuguese should be treated as friends by the English factories.†

The Company resembled other unskilful, and for that reason unprosperous, traders, in this; that they always had competitors, of one description or another, to whose proceedings they ascribed their own want of success. For several years they had spoken with loud condemnation of the clandestine trade carried on by their own servants; whose profits, they said, exceeded their own. Their alarms, too, with regard to their exclusive privilege, had for some time been sounded; and would have been sounded much louder, but for the ascendancy which the sentiments of liberty (the contentions between Charles and his parliament were already high) had gained in the nation, and the probability that their monopoly would escape the general wreck with which institutions at variance with the spirit of liberty were threatened, only if its pretensions were prudently kept in the shade. The controversy, whether monopolies, and among others that of the Company, were not injurious to the wealth and prosperity of the nation, had already been agitated through the press: but though the Company had entered boldly enough into the lists of argument, they deemed it their wisest course, at the present conjuncture, not to excite the public attention by any invidious opposition to the infringements which private adventure was now pretty frequently committing on their exclusive trade.

An event at last occurred which appeared to involve unusual danger. A number of persons, with Sir William Courten at their head, whom the new arrangements with the Portuguese excited to hopes of extraordinary gain, had the art, or the good fortune, to engage in their schemes one Endymion Porter, Esq., a gentleman of the bedchamber to the King, who prevailed upon

A Courten's Association.

* Bruce i. 306, 320, 324, 327.

† Ib. 325, 334.

Book I.

1638.

the sovereign himself to accept of a share in the adventure, and to grant his license for a new association to trade with India. The preamble to the grant declared that it was founded upon the misconduct of the East India Company, who had accomplished nothing for the good of the nation in proportion to the great privileges they had obtained, or even the funds of which they had disposed. This was not only true, but, it is highly probable, was the general opinion of the nation; as nothing less seems to have been necessary to embolden the King to such a violation of their charter. Allowing that instrument to have been contrary to the interests of the nation, it was not productive of consequences so ruinous, but that the stipulated notice of three years might have been given, and a legal end put to the monopoly. The Company petitioned the King, but without success. They sent instructions, however, to their agents and factors in India to oppose the interlopers, at least indirectly. After a little time an incident occurred of which they endeavoured to avail themselves to the utmost. One of their ships from Surat reported that a vessel of Courten's had seized two junks belonging to Surat and Diu, had plundered them, and put the crews to the torture. The latter part at least of the story was, in all probability, false; but the Directors believed, or affected to believe, the whole. The consequences of the outrage were, that the English President and Council at Surat had been imprisoned, and the property of the factory confiscated to answer for the loss. A memorial was presented to the King, setting forth, in the strongest terms, the injuries which the Company sustained by the license to Courten's Association, and the ruin which threatened them unless it were withdrawn. The Privy Council, to whom the memorial was referred, treated the facts alleged as little better than fabrication, and suspended the investigation till Courten's ships should return.*

The arrival of Courten's ships at Surat seems to have thrown the factory into an extraordinary state of confusion. It is stated as the cause of a complete suspension of trade on the part of the Company, for the season, at that principal seat of their commercial operations.† The inability early and constantly displayed by the Company to sustain even the slightest competition is apt to excite a suspicion, in those who distrust the voice of interested praise, that the system labours under inherent infirmities.

In 1637-38, several of Courten's ships returned, and brought home large investments, which sold with an ample profit to the adventurers. The fears and

* Bruce, i. 329, 337.

† Ib. 342.

jealousies of the Company were now raised to the greatest height. They presented to the crown a petition for protection; placing their chief reliance, it should seem, in the lamentable picture of their own distresses. Their remonstrances were, however, disregarded; for a new grant was issued to Courten's Association, continuing their privileges for five years; and appointing, as a boundary between them and the Company, that neither should they trade at those places where the Company had factories, nor the Company at the places where Courten's Association might form their establishments.*

CHAP. III.
1638.

The Directors were thrown into dejection; and, as if they abandoned all other efforts for sustaining their affairs, betook themselves to complaint and petition.† They renewed their addresses to the throne: They dwelt upon the calamities which had been brought upon them by competition; first, that of the Dutch, next that of Courten's Association: They endeavoured to pique the honour of the King, by remarking that the redress which he had demanded from the States General had not been received: And they desired to be at least distinctly informed what line of conduct in regard to their rivals they were required to pursue. The affairs of the King were now at a low ebb; which may account in part for the tone which the Company assumed with him. They were heard before the Privy Council, of which a committee was formed to inquire into their complaints. This committee had instructions to direct their attention, among other points, to the means of obtaining reparation from the Dutch, and the measure of a union between the Company and Courten's Association. One thing is remarkable; because it shows that, in the opinion of the Privy Council of that day, the mode of trading to India by a joint-stock Company was not good: The committee were expressly instructed, "to form regulations for this trade, which might satisfy the noblemen and gentlemen who were adventurers in it; and to vary the principle on which the India trade had been conducted, or that of a general joint-stock, in such a manner as to enable each adventurer to employ his stock to his own advantage, to have the trade under similar regulations with those observed by the Turkey and other English Companies."‡

The committee of the Privy Council seem to have given themselves but little concern about the trust with which they were invested. No report from them ever appeared. The Company continued indefatigable in pressing the King by petitions and remonstrances. At last they affirmed the necessity of abandoning the trade altogether, if the protection for which they prayed was withheld.

* Bruce, i. 345, 349.

† Ib. 349, 350, 353.

‡ Ib. 353, 354.

BOOK I. Their importunity prevailed. On the condition that they should raise a new joint-stock, to carry on the trade on a sufficient scale, it was agreed that Courten's license should be withdrawn.*

Two or more Courts of Directors; and two or more bodies of proprietors under the same charter.

On this occasion we are made acquainted incidentally with an important fact; that the Proprietors of the third joint-stock had made frequent but unavailing calls upon the Directors to close that concern, and bring home what belonged to it in India.† We thus learn, for the first time, that there were occasions on which payment was demanded of the capital of those separate funds, called the joint-stocks of the Company. In these circumstances it was a difficult question, to whom the immoveable property of the Company belonged. It had been acquired, both in houses and lands, both in India and England, by parts, indiscriminately, of all the joint-stocks. Amid the confusion which pervaded all parts of the Company's affairs, this was a question which yet had not begun to be agitated: as an encouragement, however, to subscribe to the new joint-stock, it was laid down as a condition, "That to prevent inconvenience and confusion, the old Company or adventurers in the third joint-stock should have sufficient time allowed for bringing home their property, and should send no more stock to India, after the month of May."‡ It would thus appear, that of their share in the *dead stock*, as it is technically called, the Proprietors of the third joint-stock and by the same rule of all preceding stocks with whose money it was purchased were, without any scruple, to be deprived. There was another condition, to which inferences of some importance may be attached; that the subscribers to the new stock should themselves, in a general court, elect the Directors to whom the management of the fund should be committed, and should renew that election annually.§ As this was a new Court of Directors, entirely belonging to the fourth joint-stock, it seems to follow that the Directors in whose hands the third joint-stock had been placed, must still have remained in office, for the winding up of that concern. And thus were there, to all intents and purposes, two East India Companies, two separate bodies of Proprietors, and two separate Courts of Directors, under one charter.

Fourth joint-stock.

So low, however, was the credit of East India adventure, under the bad success of joint-stock management, now reduced, that the project of a new subscription almost totally failed. Only the small sum of 22,500*l.* was raised.

* Bruce, i. 355, 361, 362.

† Ib. 363.

‡ Preamble to a subscription for a new joint-stock for trade to the East Indies, 28th January, 1640, (East India Papers in the State Paper Office), Bruce, i. 364.

§ Ib.

Upon this a memorial was presented to the King, but in the name of whom it does not appear; whether of the new subscribers, or the old; whether of the Court of Directors belonging to the old joint-stock, or of a Court of Directors chosen for the new. It set forth a number of unhappy circumstances, to which was ascribed the distrust which now attended joint-stock adventures to India; and it intimated, but in very general terms, the necessity of encouragement, to save that branch of commerce from total destruction.

CHAP. III.
1640.

In the mean time a heavy calamity fell upon the Proprietors of the third joint-stock. The King resolved to draw the sword for terminating the disputes between him and his people; and finding himself destitute of money, fixed his eyes, as on the most convenient mass of property within his reach, on the magazines of the East India Company. A price being named, which was probably a high one, he bought upon credit the whole of their pepper, and sold it again at a lower price for ready money.* Bonds, four in number, one of which was promised to be paid every six months, were given by the farmers of the customs and Lord Cottington for the amount; of which only a small portion seems ever to have been paid. On a pressing application, about the beginning of the year 1642, it was stated, that 13,000*l.* had been allowed them out of the duties they owed; the remainder the farmers declared it to be out of their power to advance. A prayer was presented that the customs now due by them, amounting to 12,000*l.* might be applied in liquidation of the debt; but for this they were afterwards pressed by the parliament. The King exerted himself to protect the parties who stood responsible for him; and what the Company were obliged to pay to the parliament, or what they succeeded in getting from the King or his sureties, no where appears.†

The King
takes the
Company's
pepper.

About the period of this abortive attempt to form a new joint-stock, a settlement was first effected at Madras; the only station as yet chosen, which was destined to make a figure in the future history of the Company. The desire of a place of strength on the coast of Coromandel, as a security both to the property of the Company and the persons of their agents, had suggested, some years ago, the fortification of Armegum. On experience, Armegum was not found a convenient station for providing the piece goods, ‡ for which chiefly the trade

A settlement
made at Ma-
dras.

* See Bruce, i. 371. The quantity was, 607,522 bags, bought at 2*s.* 1*d.* per pound, total 63,283*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.*; sold at 1*s.* 8*d.* per pound; total 50,626*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.*

† Bruce, i. 379, 380.

‡ *Piece goods* is the term which, latterly at least, has been chiefly employed by the Company and their agents to denote the muslins and wove goods of India and China in general.

Book I. to the coast of Coromandel was pursued. In 1740-41, the permission of the
 1648. local chief to erect a fort at Madraspatam was, therefore, eagerly embraced. The works were begun, and the place named Fort St. George; but the measure was not approved by the Directors.*

Efforts to obtain subscribers.

Meanwhile the trade was languishing, for want of funds. The agents abroad endeavoured to supply, by borrowing, the failure of receipts from home. †

An effort was made in 1642-43 to aid the weakness of the fourth joint-stock by a new subscription. The sum produced was 105,000*l.*; but whether including or not including the previous subscription does not appear. This was deemed no more than what was requisite for a single voyage: of which the Company thought the real circumstances might be concealed under a new name. They called it, the *First General Voyage*. ‡ Of the amount, however, of the ships, or the distribution of the funds, there is nothing on record. For several years, from this date, no account whatever is preserved of the annual equipments of the Company. It would appear from instructions to the agents abroad, that, each year, funds had been supplied; but from what source is altogether unknown. The instructions sufficiently indicate that they were small; and for this the unsettled state of the country, and the distrust of Indian adventure, will sufficiently account.

In 1644, the Dutch followed the example of the English in forming a convention with the Portuguese at Goa. Though it is not pretended that in this any partiality was shown to the Dutch, or any privilege granted to them which was withheld from the English, the Company found themselves as usual unable to sustain competition, and complained of this convention as an additional source of misfortune. §

In 1647-48, when the power of the parliament was supreme, and the King a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, a new subscription was set on foot, and a pretty obvious policy was pursued. Endeavours were used to get as many as possible of that Ruling Body to subscribe. If the members of the ruling body had a personal interest in the gains of the Company, its privileges would not fail to be both protected and enlarged. Accordingly, an advertisement, which fixed the time beyond which ordinary subscribers would not be received, added, that, in deference to members of parliament, a further period would be allowed to them, to consider the subject, and make their subscriptions. ||

* Bruce, i. 377, 393.

† Ib. 385.

‡ Ib. 389, 390.

§ Ib. 407, 412, 423.

|| Ib. 423.

It appears not that any success attended this effort; and in 1649-50, the project of completing the fourth joint-stock was renewed, partly as a foundation for an application to the Council of State, partly in hopes that the favours expected from the Council would induce the public to subscribe.*

CHAP. III.
1650.

In the memorial, presented on this occasion to the ruling powers, Courten's Association was the principal subject of complaint. The consent of the King, in 1639, to withdraw the license granted to those rivals, had not been carried into effect; nor had the condition on which it had been accorded, that of raising a respectable joint-stock, been fulfilled. The destruction, however, to which the Association of Courten thus saw themselves condemned, deprived them of the spirit of enterprise: with the spirit of enterprise, the spirit of vigilance naturally winged its flight: their proceedings from the time of this condemnation had been feeble and unsuccessful: but their existence was a grievance in the eyes of the Company; and an application which they had recently made for permission to form a settlement on the island of Assada, near Madagascar, kindled anew the Company's jealousies and fears. What the Council proposed to both parties was, an agreement. But the Assada merchants, so Courten's Association were now denominated, regarded joint-stock management with so much aversion, that, low as the condition to which they had fallen, they preferred a separate trade on their own funds to incorporation with the Company.† To prove, however, their desire of accommodation, they proposed certain terms, on which they would forego the advantage of the separate management of their own affairs.

Union with
Courten's As-
sociation.

Objections were offered on the part of the Company; but, after some discussion, a union was effected, nearly on the terms which the Assada merchants proposed.‡ Application was then made for an act to confirm and regulate the trade. The parliament passed a resolution, directing it to be carried on by a joint-stock; but suspending for the present all further decision on the Company's affairs.§ A stock was formed, which from the union recently accomplished was denominated *the united joint-stock*; but in what manner raised, or how great the sum, is not disclosed. All we know for certain is that two ships were fitted out in this season, and that they carried bullion with them to the amount of 60,000*l.* ||

The extreme inconvenience and embarrassment, which arose from the management by the same agents, in the same trade, of a number of separate capitals, belonging to separate associations; the toil and vexation of keeping the receipt

* Bruce, i. 434.

§ Ib. 439, 440.

† Ib. 435, 436.

|| Ib. 440.

‡ Ib. 437, 438.

Book I.
1654.

and expenditure of each entirely distinct from the receipt and expenditure of the rest, began now to make themselves seriously and formidably felt. From each of the presidencies complaints arrived of the difficulties, or rather the impossibilities, which they were required to surmount; and it was urgently recommended to obtain, if it were practicable, an act of parliament to combine the whole of these separate stocks into one.* Under this confusion, we have hardly any information respecting the internal transactions of the Company at home. We know not so much as how the Courts of Directors were formed; whether there was a body of Directors for each separate fund, or only one body for the whole; and if only one court of Directors, whether they were chosen by the voices of the contributors to all the separate stocks, or the contributors to one only; whether, when a Court of Proprietors was held, the owners of all the separate funds met in one body, or the owners of each separate fund met by themselves for the regulation of their own particular concern.†

Peculiar privileges obtained for the first time in Bengal.

In 1651-52, the English obtained in Bengal the first of those peculiar privileges, which were the forerunners of their subsequent power. It happened, that some surgeons were among the persons, belonging to the factories, whom there was occasion to send to the Imperial court. One of them, a gentleman of the name of Boughton, is particularly named. Obtaining great influence, by the cures which they effected, they employed their interest in promoting the views of the Company. Favourable circumstances were so well improved, that, on the payment of 3000 rupees, a government license for an unlimited trade without payment of customs, in the richest province of India, was happily obtained.‡ On the Coromandel coast, the wars, which then raged among the natives, rendered commerce difficult and uncertain; and the Directors were urged, by the agents at Madras, to add to the fortifications. This they refused, on the ground of expense. As it was inconvenient, however, to keep the business of this coast dependant on the distant settlement of Bantam, Fort St. George was erected into a presidency in 1653-54.§

When the disputes began which ended in hostilities between Cromwell and the States General, the Company deemed it a fit opportunity to bring forward those

* Bruce, i. 441.

† If we hear of committees of the several stocks; the bodies of Directors were denominated committees. And if there were committees of the several stocks, how were they constituted? were they committees of Proprietors, or committees of Directors? And were there any managers or Directors besides?

‡ Bruce, i. 406, 463.

§ Ib. 454, 462, 484.

claims of theirs against the Dutch, which amid the distractions of the government had lain dormant for several years. The war which succeeded, however favourable to the British arms in Europe, was extremely dangerous, and not a little injurious, to the feeble Company in India. On the appearance of a Dutch fleet of eight large ships off Swally in 1653-54, the English trade at Surat was suspended. In the Gulf of Persia, three of the Company's ships were taken, and one destroyed. The whole of the coasting trade of the English, consisting of the interchange of goods from one of their stations to another, became, under the naval superiority of the Dutch, so hazardous as to be almost suspended; and at Bantam, near the principal seat of the Dutch power, traffic seems to have been rendered wholly impracticable.*

CHAP. III.
1654.

As Cromwell soon reduced the Dutch to the necessity of desiring peace; and of submitting to it on terms nearly such as he thought proper to dictate; a clause was inserted in the treaty concluded at Westminster in 1654, in which they engaged to conform to whatever justice might prescribe in regard to the massacre at Amboyna. It was agreed to name four commissioners on each side, who should meet at London, and make an adjustment of the claims of the two nations. One remarkable, and by no means ill-advised condition, was, that if, within a specified time, the appointed commissioners should be unable to come to an agreement, the differences in question should be submitted to the judgment and arbitration of the Protestant Swiss cantons.†

Claims upon
the Dutch.

The Commissioners met on the 30th of August, 1654. The English Company, who have never found themselves at a loss to make out heavy claims for compensation, whether it was their own or a foreign government with which they had to deal, stated the amount of their damages, ascertained by a series of accounts, from the year 1611 to the year 1652, at the vast sum of 2,695,999*l.* 15*s.* The Dutch, however, seem to have been a match for them, even in the business of accounts. They too had their claims for compensation, on account of joint expenses not paid, or injuries and losses occasioned; which counter claims amounted to 2,919,861*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* It is impossible to pronounce with accuracy on the justice, comparative or absolute, of these several demands. There is no doubt that both were excessively exaggerated. But if we consider, that, under the domineering ascendancy which the Protector had acquired with regard to the Dutch, it was expedient for them to submit, and natural for the English to overreach; while we observe that the award, pronounced by the Commissioners,

* Bruce, i. 458, 482, 484, 485.

† Ib. 489.

Book I. 1654. allotted to the English no more than 85,000*l.*, to be paid by two instalments, we shall not find any reason, distinct from national partiality, to persuade us that the Dutch demands were at the greatest distance from justice and truth. All the satisfaction obtained for the massacre of Amboyna, even by the award of the same commissioners, was 3,615*l.*, to be paid to the heirs or executors of those who had suffered.* Polaroon was given up to the English, but not worth the receiving.

Petition
against joint-
stock manage-
ment.

Reasons for.

Various occurrences strongly mark the sense, which appears to have been generally entertained, of the unprofitable nature of joint-stock. That particular body of proprietors, including the Assada merchants, to whom the united joint-stock belonged, presented to the Council of State, in 1654, two separate petitions; in which they prayed that the East India Company should no longer proceed exclusively on the principle of a joint-stock trade, but that the owners of the separate funds should have authority to employ their own capital, servants, and shipping, in the way which they themselves should deem most to their own advantage.† The Directors, whose power and consequence were threatened, shook with alarm. They hastened to present those pleas which are used as their best weapons of defence to the present day. Experience had proved the necessity of a joint-stock; since the trade had been carried on by a joint-stock during forty years: Such competitions as those with the Portuguese and the Dutch could only be supported by the strength of a joint-stock: The equipments for the India trade required a capital so large as a joint-stock alone could afford: The failure of Courten's experiment proved that voyages on any other principle could not succeed: The factories requisite for the Indian trade could be established only by a joint-stock, the East India Company having factories in the dominions of no less than fourteen different sovereigns: The native princes required engagements to make good the losses which they or their subjects might sustain at the hand of Englishmen; and to this a joint-stock company alone was competent.

On these grounds they not only prayed that the trade by joint-stock should be exclusively continued; but, as it had been impracticable for some time to obtain sufficient subscriptions, that additional encouragement should be given by new

* Bruce, i. 491.

† The reasons on which they supported their request, as stated in their petition, exhibit so just a view of the infirmities of joint-stock management, as compared with that of individuals pursuing their own interests, that they are highly worthy of inspection as a specimen of the talents and knowledge of the men by whom joint-stock was now opposed. See Bruce, i. 518.

privileges; and, in particular, that assistance should be granted, sufficient to enable them to recover and retain the Spice Islands.*

In their reply, the body of petitioners, who were now distinguished by the name of Merchant Adventurers, chiefly dwelt upon the signal want of success, which had attended the trade to India, during forty years of joint-stock management. They asserted, that private direction and separate voyages would have been far more profitable; as the prosperity of those open Companies, the Turkey, Muscovy, and Eastland Companies, sufficiently evinced. They claimed a right, by agreement, to a share in the factories and privileges of the Company in India; and stated that they were fitting out fourteen ships for the trade.† They might have still further represented, that every one of the arguments advanced by the Directors, without even a single exception, was a mere assumption of the thing to be proved. That the trade had, during forty years, or four hundred years, been carried on by a joint-stock, proved not that, by a different mode of carrying on, it would not have yielded much greater advantage: if the trade had been in the highest degree unprosperous, it rather proved that the management had been proportionally defective. The Directors, who with their joint-stock had so ill supported competition, asserted that for this purpose private adventure would altogether fail; though Courten's Association had threatened to drive them out of every market in which they had appeared; and though they themselves had repeatedly and solemnly declared to government that, unless the license to Courten were withdrawn, the ruin of the East India Company was sure. With regard to *mercantile* competition, at any rate, the skill and vigilance of individuals transacting for their own interest was sure to be a more powerful instrument than the imbecility and negligence of joint-stock management: and as to *warlike* competition, a few ships of war, with a few companies of marines, employed by the government, would have yielded far more security than all the efforts which a feeble joint-stock could make. The failure of Courten's Association was sufficiently accounted for by the operation of particular causes, altogether distinct from the general circumstances of the trade; the situation, in fact, in which the jealousy and influence of the Company had placed them. The establishment of factories was by no means so necessary as the Company ignorantly supposed, and interestedly strove to persuade; as they shortly after found to their cost, when they were glad to reduce the greater number. Where factories were really useful, it would be for

CHAP. III.

1654.

Reasons
against.

* Bruce, i. 492, 493.

† Ib. i. 494.

Book I.

1655.

the interest of all the traders to support them. And all would join in an object of common utility in India, as they joined in every other quarter of the globe. As to the native princes, there was no such difficulty as the Company pretended; nor would individual merchants have been less successful than the directors of a joint-stock, in finding the means of prosecuting the trade.

These contending pretensions were referred to a committee of the Council of State; and they, without coming to a decision, remitted the subject to the Protector and Council, as too difficult and important for the judgment of any inferior tribunal.*

Disputes
among the
owners of the
different
stocks.

Nothing could exceed the confusion which, from the clashing interests of the owners of the separate stocks, now raged in the Company's affairs. There were no less than three parties, who set up claims to the Island of Polaroon, and to the compensation money which had been obtained from the Dutch: The respective proprietors of the third, fourth, and united joint-stocks. The proprietors of the third joint-stock claimed the whole, as the fourth joint-stock and the united stock were not in existence at the time when the debt obtained from the Dutch was incurred; and they prayed that the money might be lodged in safe and responsible hands, till government should determine the question. The owners of the two other stocks demanded that the money should be divided into three equal shares for the three several stocks, and that they should all have equal rights to the Island of Polaroon.

Five arbitrators, to whom the dispute was referred, were chosen by the Council of State. In the mean time Cromwell proposed to borrow the 85,000*l.* which had been paid by the Dutch, and could not be employed till judgment determined to whom it belonged.

The Directors, however, had expected the fingering of the money, and they advanced reasons why it should be immediately placed in their hands. The pecuniary distresses of the Company were great: The different stocks were 50,000*l.* in debt; and many of the proprietors were in difficult circumstances: From gratitude to the Protector, however, they would make exertions to spare him 50,000*l.* to be repaid in eighteen months by instalments, provided the remainder 35,000*l.* were immediately assigned them, to pay their most pressing debts, and make a dividend to the Proprietors.† It thus appears, that these Directors wanted to forestall the decision of the question; and to distribute the money at their own pleasure, before it was known to whom it belonged. At the same

* Bruce, i. 503.

† Ib. 503, 504.

time it is matter of curious uncertainty who these Directors were, whom they represented, by what set or sets of Proprietors they were chosen, or to whom they were responsible. CHAP. III.
1656.

While this dispute was yet undecided, the Merchant Adventurers, or Proprietors of the united stock, obtained a commission from the Protector to fit out four ships for the Indian trade, under the management of a committee.* We are upon this occasion made acquainted with a very interesting fact. The news of this event being carried to Holland, it was interpreted and understood by the Dutch as being an abolition of the exclusive charter, and the adoption of the new measure of a free and open trade. The interests of the Dutch Company made them see, in this supposed revolution, very different consequences from those which the interests of the English Directors made them believe or pretend that they beheld in it. Instead of rejoicing at the loss of a joint-stock in England, which they ought to have done, if by joint-stock alone the trade of their rivals could successfully be carried on; they were filled with dismay at the prospect of freedom, as likely to produce a trade with which they would attempt a competition in vain.†

Meanwhile the Company, as well as the Merchant Adventurers, were employed in the equipment of a fleet. The petition of the Company to the Protector for leave to export bullion specified the sum of only 15,000*l.*: the fleet consisted of three ships. They continued to press the government for a decision in favour of their exclusive privileges; and in a petition which they presented in October, 1656, affirmed, that the great number of ships, sent by individuals under licenses, had raised the price of India goods from 40 to 50 per cent., and reduced that of English commodities in the same proportion. The Council resolved at last to come to a decision. After some inquiry, they gave it as their advice to the Protector to continue the exclusive trade and the joint-stock. In consequence of this, a committee of the Council was appointed to consider the terms of a charter.‡

While the want of funds almost annihilated the operations of the Company's

While the English Company languish the Dutch flourish.

* Bruce, i. 508.

† Thurloe's State Papers, iii. 80. Anderson says, "The merchants of Amsterdam having heard that the Lord Protector would dissolve the East India Company at London, and declare the navigation and commerce to the Indies to be free and open, were greatly alarmed, considering such a measure as ruinous to their own East India Company." Anderson's History of Commerce, in Macpherson's Annals, ii. 459. See Bruce, i. 518.

‡ Bruce, i. 514—516.

BOOK I.

1657.

agents in every part of India; and while they complained that the competition of the ships of the Merchant Adventurers rendered it, as usual, impracticable for them to trade with a profit in the markets of India, the Dutch pursued their advantages against the Portuguesc. They had acquired possession of the island of Ceylon, and in the year 1656-57 blockaded the port of Goa, after which they meditated an attack upon the small island of Diu, which commanded the entrance into the harbour of Swally. The success of these plans would give them a complete command of the navigation on that side of India, and the power of imposing on the English trade duties which it would be unable to bear.*

* Bruce, i. 522—529.